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HOW JESUS MET LIFE QUESTIONS

LIFE PROBLEM BIBLE STUDIES

HOW JESUS MET LIFE QUESTIONS
Harrison S. Elliott

JESUS AND HIS CAUSE
A. Bruce Curry, Jr.

HOW JESUS MET LIFE QUESTIONS

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Editorial Secretary, Association Press



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FOREWORD

The title of this book exactly explains its purpose and viewpoint. This is not a book about the Bible, but is intended as a guide, through personal study and group discussion, to a direct study of the New Testament record to find "how Jesus met life questions." The topic or problem of each chapter is stated in present-day form. The individual students and the group members are challenged to consider for themselves both the present-day issue and the issue Jesus faced, to see how Jesus met the problem. Each one is asked to reach his own conclusion as to what Jesus' ideal really was, and to apply this heroically in relation to the present-day problems as he meets them.

It is hoped that those who use the book will read and study the records of Jesus' life eagerly, open-mindedly, as if coming to them for the first time. Earnest attempt has been made not to bias in any way the thinking and conclusions of those who use the book. There is no particular set of ideas regarding the life and teachings of Jesus which the author is attempting to set forth. The purpose is to get others to form ideas of their own rather than to adopt those which may appeal to him.

Only such modern questions have been introduced into each chapter as seem in their real issue and problem to be the same as Jesus faced and upon which it seems fair to go to the life of Jesus for direct help as to his viewpoint. A major question at present is whether Jesus' ideals and principles will really work in the modern world. In answering this question, too often Jesus' life and teachings are warped to confirm some opinion that a person already holds, or some current idea of that for which Jesus stood is accepted. An earnest attempt has been made here to stimulate open-minded reading of the records, so that each individual or group may come to his own viewpoint as to Jesus' attitude and idea on the problem in hand.

Each chapter has three sections. After a brief introductory statement of the problem or question of the chapter, the *Bible references* are printed out. The Moffatt translation is used, not as a substitute for the use of one's own Testament, but for comparison and to bring the challenge of a new translation. This is followed by *Suggestions for Personal Study*. These are questions upon the Scripture, intended to lead the reader to discover the issue or situation in each reference and to find the big ideas for which Jesus stood. These Suggestions, in seven sections, can be used for daily study in the Morning Watch or followed in a study of the chapter at a single sitting if preferred.

The third section, *Questions for Group Discussion*, are intended for the guidance of the group or for personal use as a summary.

The first twenty-one chapters cover, in the order of the Matthew-Mark-Luke record, the major events in Jesus' life. The order given in Sharman, "Records of the Life of Jesus" and "Jesus in the Records," has been followed. Eight supplementary chapters cover other problems faced by Jesus at various times in his life and on which we seem to have a right to go to his life for help. Each chapter has also one central problem and is a unit in itself. Accordingly the book can be used for a series of topical or problem studies (see page ix for Topical Index), using the chapters in whatever order the problems and needs of the group may dictate, or as a systematic study of the life of Jesus from the problem approach.

To the Leader

The Questions for Group Discussion include many questions which have actually been used in discussion groups. They are arranged in the order in which they would be used in an actual group, though there are more questions than could be used in any one discussion. Each set will be found to contain, first, questions with which to open the discussion. These are usually concrete, out of the experience of the group, and intended to capture interest and to make living and vital the major problem for discussion. Second, there are questions on the biblical material, intended to lead the group members to examine for themselves each incident or story so as to understand the situation Jesus faced and to discover how he met it and what he stood for. These usually close with a summary question to gather up the thinking of the group and give a chance for the formulation of the *Big Idea* for which Jesus stood. Third, there are questions which have to do with action. These challenge the application of Jesus' ideal to various present-day problems. These are intended to lead to a consideration of the changes in life today which the adoption of Jesus' ideal would make necessary, whether these changes are practicable, and how they can be brought about. It will thus be seen that the questions are arranged in the order of rewarding individual or group thinking, namely, (1) Problem; (2) Solution; (3) Action.

The leader will not follow these questions mechanically. He will need to choose, revise, eliminate, add and thus make a list of his own, covering, however, questions for each of the three sections suggested above—namely, questions to make the PROBLEM understood; questions leading to a search for Jesus' SOLUTION; questions to make possible ACTION, the application of the solution of the problems which has been arrived at.

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CHAPTER I

What Do the People of the World Want?

A Study of the National Hopes in Jesus' Day

The hopes and longings of the world show forth on the pages of every morning's newspaper. During the Great War, victory and peace were the great desires. When the War was over, the nations of Europe began asking for enough to eat and wear, and longing for a return of prosperity. What do the peoples of the world most want today?

Jesus' nation had great national hopes. Though a subject people for six centuries, like the Poles, the Jews never lost their national consciousness nor their deep longing to be free. As you read these records of the beginning of Jesus' life, jot down the great hopes of the Jews as you find them here suggested.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Luke 1: 46-55.

46 Then Mary said:

"My soul magnifies the Lord,

47 *My spirit has joy in God my Saviour:*

48 *for he has considered the humiliation of his servant.*

From this time forth all generations will call me blessed,

49 *for He who is Mighty has done great things for me.*

His name is holy,

50 *his mercy is on generation after generation,*

for those who reverence him.

51 *He has done a deed of might with his arm,*

he has scattered the proud with their purposes,

52 *princes he has dethroned and the poor he has uplifted,*

53 *he has satisfied the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.*

54 *He has succoured his servant Israel,*

mindful of his mercy—

55 *as he promised our fathers,*

to have mercy on Abraham and his offspring for ever."

Luke 2: 27-32

27 When the parents of the child Jesus carried him in to perform the customary regulations of the law for him,
 28 then Symeon took him in his arms, blessed God, and said,
 29 "Now, Master, thou canst let thy servant go,
 and go in peace, as thou didst promise;
 30 for mine eyes *have seen thy saving power*
 31 which thou hast prepared *before the face of all the peoples,*
 32 *to be a light of revelation for the Gentiles*
and a glory to thy people Israel."

Luke 2: 41-52

41 Every year his parents used to travel to Jerusalem at the
 42 passover festival; and when he was twelve years old they
 43 went up as usual to the festival. After spending the full
 number of days they came back, but the boy Jesus stayed
 behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know of this,
 44 they supposed he was in the caravan and travelled on for
 a day, searching for him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances.
 45 Then, as they failed to find him, they came
 46 back to Jerusalem in search of him. Three days later they
 found him in the temple, seated among the teachers, listening
 47 to them and asking them questions, till all his hearers
 48 were amazed at the intelligence of his own answers. When
 his parents saw him they were astounded, and his mother
 said to him, "My son, why have you behaved like this to
 us? Here have your father and I been looking for you
 49 anxiously!" "Why did you look for me?" he said "Did you
 50 not know I had to be at my Father's house?" But they
 51 did not understand what he said. Then he went down
 along with them to Nazaret, and did as they told him.
 52 His mother treasured up everything in her heart. And
 Jesus *increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favour*
with God and man.

Matt. 3: 1, 2.

1 In those days John the Baptist came on the scene, preaching
 2 in the desert of Judaea, "Repent, the Reign of heaven is near."

Luke 3: 1-20.

1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar,
 when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod being
 tetrarch of Galilee, Philip his brother tetrarch of the country
 of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysias tetrarch of Abilene,
 2 during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas the word
 of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the desert;
 3 and he went into all the Jordan-district preaching a baptism

- 4 of repentance for the remission of sins—as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah,
*The voice of one who cries in the desert,
 'Make the way ready for the Lord,
 level the paths for him.*
- 5 *Every valley shall be filled up,
 every hill and mound laid low,
 the crooked made straight,
 the rough roads smooth;*
- 6 *so shall all flesh see the saving power of God.'*
- 7 To the crowds who came out to get baptized by him John said, "You brood of vipers, who told you to flee from the
- 8 coming Wrath? Now, produce fruits that answer to your repentance, instead of beginning to say to yourselves, 'We have a father in Abraham' I tell you, God can raise up
- 9 children for Abraham from these stones! The axe is lying all ready at the root of the trees; any tree that is not producing good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."
- 10 The crowds asked him, "Then what are we to do?" He
- 11 replied, "Let everyone who possesses two shirts share with him who has none, and let him who has food do like-
- 12 wise." Taxgatherers also came to get baptized, and they
- 13 said to him, "Teacher, what are we to do?" He said to
- 14 them, "Never exact more than your fixed rate" Soldiers also asked him, "And what are we to do?" He said to them, "Never extort money, never lay a false charge, but be content with your pay."
- 15 Now as people's expectations were roused and as everybody thought to himself about John, "Can he be the Christ,"
- 16 John said to them all,
 "I baptize you with water,
 but after me one who is mightier will come,
 and I am not fit to untie the string of his sandals;
 he will baptize you with the holy Spirit and fire.
- 17 His winnowing-fan is in his hand to purge his threshing floor.
 to gather the wheat into his granary
 and burn the straw with fire unquenchable."
- 18 Thus with many another appeal he spoke his message to
- 19 the people. But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias his brother's wife as well as for all
- 20 the wickedness that he, Herod, had committed, crowned all by shutting John up in prison.

Mark 11 9-11.

- 9 Now it was in those days that Jesus arrived from Nazaret.

- 10 in Galilee and got baptized in the Jordan by John. And the
 moment he rose from the water he saw the heavens cleft
 11 and the Spirit coming down upon him like a dove; then said
 a voice from heaven,
 'Thou art my Son, the Beloved,
 in thee is my delight.'

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY¹

1. **Luke 1: 46-55.** What does Mary say the coming of Jesus will accomplish? What is our ambition for our nation?
2. **Luke 2: 27-32.** From this statement about Jesus, what would you think the people were expecting?
3. **Luke 2: 41-52.** Notice how loyal Joseph and Mary were to the national customs of the Jews. See verse 41.
4. **Matt. 3: 1, 2; Luke 3: 1-6.** The Jews believed that a deliverer, the Messiah, would come to make them free from the Roman power and set up the "Kingdom of God," in which there would be prosperity and righteousness and peace. When reading this passage, remember that the announcement "The Kingdom of God is here" brought the same thrill of hope in conquered Palestine as has the proclamation in subject European lands: "The autocracy is overthrown, a democracy is at hand."
5. **Luke 3: 7-14.** "Repent! Stop your graft; act square and fair." This is what John demanded. Where would this hit our country the hardest?
6. **Luke 3: 15-20.** The people here ask: "Is John really the Christ?" Why did they think he might be the Deliverer for whom they were looking?
7. **Mark 1: 9-11.** If you had been the carpenter Jesus, in the little village of Nazareth, and a traveler had come and reported with eager voice: "A man down on the Jordan says that the new kingdom we have been looking for is here; crowds are flocking to his standard," what would you have done?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What are the big ambitions of our nation today? What do our leaders seem to hope she will become?
2. What were the great longings of the peoples of the world during the Great War? What things do the people of the world most want today?
3. Which nations represent the greatest tension and friction

¹ The Suggestions for Personal Study are divided into seven sections, so that they may be usable as a guide in daily Bible reading and study, as well as in the study of the chapter at one sitting.

points in the world today? What are the outstanding causes of this tension?

4. What were the causes of national tension and unrest among the Jews? Judging from this week's study (Sections 1 to 7, Suggestions for Personal Study), what would you say the Jews most wanted for their nation?

5. What hopes were aroused by John's ringing appeal: "Repent, the Kingdom of God is here"? Why did the crowds respond to John's challenge? Why did Jesus respond?

6. Compare the sources of tension and the hopes in the nations today with those in Jesus' day. In what regards are they the same; in what regards are they different?

7. Now that the War is over, what big jobs has the nation left to do? In their demands for sacrifice and devotion, how do they compare with the calls of war time?

8. What demands are coming upon our nation for help in world affairs? How much and what responsibility should she take in response to these calls?

CHAPTER II

What Should We Choose?

Jesus Faces His Mission for His Nation

A call from the nation always means decision: How best can I help? So Jesus, after deciding to leave his business as a carpenter and answer his nation's call, spent forty days in earnest thought and prayer deciding how best he could help his people and the world. This week's readings give three possible courses of action suggested to Jesus which he decided not to follow, and the fourth, which he chose. If we can sense the genuine struggles of Jesus' decision, perhaps it will help us in deciding when we come as individuals or a nation to forks in the road.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Matt. 4: 1-11.

- 1 Then Jesus was led into the desert by the Spirit to be
- 2 tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights
- 3 and afterwards felt hungry. So the tempter came up and
- 4 said to him, "If you are God's Son, tell these stones to be-
- 4 come loaves." He answered, "It is written,
Man is not to live on bread alone,
but on every word that issues from the mouth of God."
- 5 Then the devil conveyed him to the holy city and, placing
- 6 him on the pinnacle of the temple, said to him, "If you are
- God's Son, throw yourself down; for it is written,
He will give his angels charge of you;
they will bear you on their hands,
lest you strike your foot against a stone."
- 7 Jesus said to him, "It is written again, *You shall not tempt*
- 8 *the Lord your God*" Once more the devil conveyed him,
- to an exceedingly high mountain and showed him all the
- 9 realms of the world and their grandeur; he said, "I will
- give you all that if you will fall down and worship me."
- 10 Then Jesus told him, "Begone, Satan! it is written, *You*
- must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone."*
- 11 At this the devil left him, and angels came up and min-
- istered to him.

Luke 4: 16-21.

- Then he came to Nazaret, where he had been brought up, and on the sabbath he entered the synagogue as was his custom. He stood up to read the lesson and was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah; on opening the book he came upon the place where it was written,
- The Spirit of the Lord is upon me:
for he has consecrated me to preach the gospel to the poor,
he has sent me to proclaim release for captives and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set free the oppressed,
to proclaim the Lord's year of favour.*
- Then, folding up the book, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him and he proceeded to tell them that "To-day, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Matt. 4: 1-4.** In reading about the first possible course of action suggested to Jesus, remember that the people of Palestine were bitterly poor and needy and that Jesus himself was hungry because of his long fast. Why do you think Jesus here refused to satisfy the hunger of himself and his people?

2. Read again **Matt. 4: 1-4.** What did Jesus mean by "Man shall not live by bread alone"? When laborers are well fed and clothed, why do they still strike? Why is not plenty to eat and wear enough for the individual or the nation?

3. **Matt. 4: 5-7.** In reading the account of the second possible course of action suggested to Jesus, keep in mind that many of the people expected this deliverer to come miraculously. Indeed, there was a popular belief that the Messiah would appear on the pinnacle of the temple and cast himself down unharmed. Why do you think Jesus refused to gather a following by playing to favor in this way?

4. Think again about the suggestion which came to Jesus that he gain a following by playing to popular favor. **Matt. 4: 5-7.** To what extent can an individual or a nation afford to follow the popular road? How does the election of political candidates today depend upon their playing to popular favor?

5. **Matt. 4: 8-11.** In reading about the third possible course of action suggested to Jesus, remember there was in Palestine a revolutionary party, known as the Zealots, who believed this deliverer would be a military commander, like Judas, the Hammerer, who could lead them in throwing off the hated Roman power. In your opinion, could Jesus have led a successful

military revolution? Why do you think Jesus refused to lead a revolution to free his people from the galling Roman yoke? What more than revolution is necessary to insure a "new day" for a nation?

6. Think again about Jesus' refusal to head up a military revolution. Why do revolutionists against tyranny so frequently practice equal tyranny when they come into power? How can we be sure that our nation and the other powers will use their strength for the good of the world?

7. **Luke 4: 16-21.** When Jesus told his own townspeople in the village synagogue what he had decided to do, he chose from the many possible prophecies a passage of the exile period, in which the prophet declares to the exiles in Babylon their approaching deliverance. Read this passage carefully in its historical setting, and state in present-day language just what you would say Jesus decided to do.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What would you say are the different possible courses of action men are asking our nation today to follow in world affairs? What are the reasons given for each?

2. Let us compare the three possible courses of action suggested to Jesus as ways to help his nation:

a. **Matt. 4: 1-4** (Sections 1, 2) The people of Palestine were poor and Jesus was hungry from his long fast. Why did Jesus refuse to satisfy the hunger of himself and his people? Why is not plenty to eat and wear enough for the individual and the nation?

b. **Matt. 4: 5-7** (Sections 3, 4). What in the popular expectation of the people made this a real issue? Why did Jesus refuse to gather a following by playing to popular favor? What are the dangers of a movement founded on popularity?

c. **Matt. 4: 8-11** (Sections 5, 6). How strong was the revolutionary party in Palestine? Could Jesus have led a successful military revolution? Why do you think he refused to lead a revolution to free his people from the galling Roman yoke?

3. In what regards do you think the choosing of either of these three ways would have been disastrous to Jesus' work for his nation?

4. Compare the possibilities suggested to Jesus as paths of action for his people with the possibilities that politicians are suggesting for our nation today. On the basis of Jesus' refusal, which of these choices suggested to our nation would you say that she should avoid?

5. Compare the possibilities suggested to Jesus at the beginning of his public work with those before each young person as he faces his life and life work. What are the conflicting points of view from which he may plan his life?

6. Just what did Jesus decide regarding his mission as leader of his people? Luke 4: 16-21 (Section 7). How far do you think it is possible for a nation or an individual today to carry out a mission of this sort in the world? How?

7. Designate some ways in which individuals may follow Jesus' ideal in their life and life work today.

8. How did Jesus go about it to make his decision? How can a nation or an individual be sure the right choice is made at the forks of the road?

CHAPTER III

How Can We Help the Need of the World?

Jesus Helps Relieve His People's Distress

The Great War destroyed millions of property, devastated towns, left millions of people maimed and starving and in desperate need. It will take years to rehabilitate the world from the devastation of war. Added to this are the perennial poverty and disease and suffering, particularly among that two-thirds of the world's population found in so-called non-Christian lands.

How much and what responsibility should a Christian and a Christian nation feel in meeting this tragic human need and suffering? Let us see what Jesus' attitude was toward the suffering and need of his day.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Luke 4: 16-21.

- 16 Then he came to Nazaret, where he had been brought up,
and on the sabbath he entered the synagogue as was his
17 custom. He stood up to read the lesson and was handed the
book of the prophet Isaiah; on opening the book he came
upon the place where it was written,
18 *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me:
for he has consecrated me to preach the gospel to the poor,
he has sent me to proclaim release for captives and re-
covery of sight for the blind,
to set free the oppressed,
to proclaim the Lord's year of favour.*
19 Then, folding up the book, he handed it back to the attendant
and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed
21 on him, and he proceeded to tell them that "To-day, this
scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

Mark 1: 16-45.

- 16 Now as he passed along the sea of Galilee he saw Simon
and Simon's brother Andrew netting fish in the sea—for
17 they were fishermen; so Jesus said to them, "Come, follow

18 me and I will make you fish for men." At once they
19 dropped their nets and went after him. Then going on a
little further he saw James the son of Zebedaeus and his
brother John; they too were in their boat, mending their
20 nets; he called them at once, and they left their father
Zebedaeus in the boat with the crew and went to follow
him

21 They then entered Capharnahum. As soon as the sab-
bath came, he at once began to teach in the synagogue;
22 and they were astounded at his teaching, for he taught
23 them like an authority, not like the scribes. Now there
was a man with an unclean spirit in their synagogue, who
24 at once shrieked out, "Jesus of Nazaret, what business
have you with us? Have you come to destroy us? We
25 know who you are, you are God's holy One." But Jesus
26 checked it; "Be quiet," he said, "come out of him." And
after convulsing him the unclean spirit did come out of
27 him with a loud cry. Then they were all so amazed that
they discussed it together, saying, "Whatever is this?" "It's
new teaching with authority behind it!" "He orders even
28 unclean spirits!" "Yes, and they obey him!" So his fame
at once spread in all directions through the whole of the sur-
rounding country of Galilee.

28 On leaving the synagogue they went straight to the house
of Simon and Andrew, accompanied by James and John.
30 Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with fever, so they told
31 him at once about her, and he went up to her and taking her
hand made her rise; the fever left her at once and she
32 ministered to them. Now when evening came, when the
sun set, they brought him all who were ill or possessed by
33 daemons—indeed the whole town was gathered at the door
34—and he cured many who were ill with various diseases
and cast out many daemons; but as the daemons knew
35 him he would not let them say anything. Then in the
early morning, long before daylight, he got up and went
36 away out to a lonely spot. He was praying there when
37 Simon and his companions hunted him out and discovered
him; they told him, "Everybody is looking for you," but he
38 said to them, "Let us go somewhere else, to the adjoining
country-towns, so that I may preach there as well; that is why
39 I came out here." And he went preaching in their synagogues
throughout the whole of Galilee, casting out daemons.

40 A leper came to him beseeching him on bended knee, say-
41 ing, "If you only choose, you can cleanse me;" so he
stretched his hand out in pity and touched him saying,
42 "I do choose, be cleansed." And the leprosy at once left
43 him and he was cleansed. Then he sent him off at once

- 44 with the stern charge, "See, you are not to say a word to anybody; away and show yourself to the priest and offer what Moses prescribed for your cleansing, to notify men."
- 45 But he went off and proceeded to proclaim it aloud and spread news of the affair both far and wide. The result was that Jesus could no longer enter any town openly; he stayed outside in lonely places, and people came to him from every quarter.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Luke 4: 16-22.** With the need of the world in mind, read again Jesus' announcement of what he intended to do. What do you think he would want his followers to do toward setting free subject races in Europe and Asia, toward rehabilitating devastated areas, toward helping feed and clothe those in need?
2. **Mark 1: 16-20.** What opportunity did Jesus offer James and John? What do you think he meant by "fishers of men"?
3. **Mark 1: 21-34.** Read rapidly this record of a typical Sabbath day, noting especially the principal things which Jesus did. Check this up with your idea of a "good" Sunday.
4. Read again **Mark 1: 21-34.** See how much attention Jesus gave to meeting the physical needs of people. What place should helping people's physical needs have in a Christian program? What place does it have?
5. **Mark 1: 21-34.** Compare this day's work with what Jesus said at Nazareth he was planning to do. (See Section 1.)
6. **Mark 1: 35-39.** Why were the crowds seeking Jesus? What did Jesus do?
7. **Mark 1: 40-45.** Jesus' sympathy reached even the most loathsome outcasts and lepers. What steps are being taken to-day to reach similar groups?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. In what sections of the world today is there the greatest suffering and economic stress? In which of these does the distress actually endanger the stability of the country and the peace of the world? How?
2. Just how much is our nation to blame for the continuance of these conditions in the world?
3. What place should the relief of distress and the meeting of physical need have in a Christian program?
- a. What examples occur in the incidents in this chapter **Mark 1: 16-45** (Sections 2-7) of Jesus' relief of suffering and distress? If Mark's record of a day's work is typical, what relative

place would you say Jesus gave in his work to such physical ministrations? Why?

b. In the program of the Church in America, what attention is given to removing distress and suffering?

c. In the missionary work of the Church abroad what is the relative emphasis placed on meeting physical needs through medical and other similar activities? Why?

d. List the evidences and agencies of philanthropy beyond the direct influence of the Christian religion; list the same where the Christian influence has been felt. How has Christianity affected the need of the world?

4. What nations have need of our help at this time? How does our responsibility compare with that of other countries in this matter? What part do you feel we should take in relieving the distress and suffering of the world?

5. What are the next steps in eliminating preventable disease, industrial accidents, exploitation of women and children, and poverty? What responsibility should the churches assume?

6. Some people feel that the Church will best help on the cause of human need by holding to its task of winning individuals to Christianity; others feel that it must take a positive part in movements for social betterment, and even in economic and political movements for social reconstruction, at the risk of misunderstanding and difficulty. What answer would represent the spirit of Jesus?

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CHAPTER IV

How Far Should Custom Determine Standards of Conduct?

Jesus' Attitude toward Commonly Accepted Standards

In Jesus' day to be religious a man must observe many minute rules of conduct, covering every detail of life. In modern life many of our standards of right and wrong are the result of custom.

Jesus soon came into clash with the religious leaders of his day, the Scribes and Pharisees, because he refused to follow many of these religious customs and rules. When reading the incidents, let us see why he did this and what ideal he followed. It may help us in deciding what is right or wrong in conduct.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Mark 2: 1-28.

1 When he entered Capharnahum again after some days
2 it was reported that he was at home, and a large number at once gathered, till there was no more room for them, not even at the door. He was speaking the word to
3 them, when a paralytic was brought to him; four men
4 carried him, and as they could not get near Jesus on account of the crowd they tore up the roof under which he stood and through the opening they lowered the pallet
5 on which the paralytic lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven."
6 Now there were some scribes sitting there who argued in their hearts, "What does the man mean by talking like this? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins,
7 who but God alone?" Conscious at once that they were arguing to themselves in this way, Jesus asked them, "Why
8 do you argue thus in your hearts? Which is the easier thing, to tell the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to
9 tell him, 'Rise, lift your pallet, and go away'? But to let you see the Son of man has power on earth to forgive
10 sins"—he said to the paralytic, "Rise, I tell you, lift your
11 pallet, and go home." And he rose, lifted his pallet at
12 once, and went off before them all; at this they were all

amazed and glorified God saying, "We never saw the like of it!"

- 13 Then he went out again by the seaside, and all the crowd
 14 came to him and he taught them. As he passed along he
 saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax-office; he
 said to him, "Follow me," and he rose and followed him.
 15 Now Levi was at table in his own house, and he had many
 taxgatherers and sinners as guests along with Jesus and
 his disciples—for there were many of them among his fol-
 16 lowers. So when some scribes of the Pharisees saw he was
 eating with sinners and taxgatherers they said to his dis-
 ciples, "Why does he eat and drink with taxgatherers and
 17 sinners?" On hearing this, Jesus said to them,
 "Those who are strong have no need of a doctor, but those
 who are ill:

I have not come to call just men but sinners."

- 18 As the disciples of John and of the Pharisees were ob-
 serving a fast, people came and asked him, "Why do John's
 disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, and your
 19 disciples do not fast?" Jesus said to them,

"Can friends at a wedding fast while the bridegroom is
 beside them?

As long as they have the bridegroom beside them they
 cannot fast.

- 20 A time will come when the bridegroom is taken from
 them; then they will fast, on that day.

- 21 No one stitches a piece of undressed cloth on an old
 coat,
 otherwise the patch breaks away, the new from the
 old,
 and the tear is made worse:

- 22 no one pours fresh wine into old wineskins,
 otherwise the wine will burst the wineskins,
 and both wine and wineskins are ruined."

- 23 Now it happened that he was passing through the corn-
 fields on the sabbath, and as the disciples made their way
 24 through they began to pull the ears of corn. The Pharisees
 said to him, "Look at what they are doing on the sabbath!
 25 That is not allowed." He said to them, "Have you never
 read what David did when he was in need and hungry,
 26 he and his men? He went into the house of God (Abiathar
 was high priest then) and ate *the loaves of the Presence*
 which no one except the priests is allowed to eat, and also
 27 shared them with his followers." And he said to them,

"The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sab-
 bath:

- 28 so that the Son of man is Lord even over the sabbath."

Mark 3: 1-12.

1 Again he entered a synagogue. Now a man was there
 2 whose hand was withered, and they watched to see if he
 3 would heal him on the sabbath, so as to get a charge against
 4 him. He said to the man with the withered hand, "Rise
 5 and come forward;" then he asked them, "Is it right to
 6 help or to hurt on the sabbath, to save life or to kill?"
 7 They were silent. Then glancing round him in anger and
 8 vexation at their obstinacy he told the man, "Stretch out
 9 your hand." He stretched it out and his hand was quite
 10 restored. On this the Pharisees withdrew and at once joined
 11 the Herodians in a plot against him, to destroy him.
 12 Jesus retired with his disciples to the sea, and a large
 number of people from Galilee followed him; also a large
 number came to him from Judaea, Jerusalem, Idumaea, the
 other side of the Jordan, and the neighbourhood of Tyre
 and Sidon, as they had heard of his doings. So he told his
 disciples to have a small boat ready; it was to prevent
 him being crushed by the crowd, for he healed so many
 that all who had complaints were pressing on him to get
 a touch of him. And whenever the unclean spirits saw
 him they fell down before him, screaming, "You are the
 Son of God!" But he charged them strictly and severely
 not to make him known.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Mark 2: 1-12.** In Jesus' day all sickness and disease were considered a punishment for sin, and so a man afflicted as this man was, thought the cause was the fact that he was a sinner. Why did Jesus put the man's need above the rules about blasphemy?

2. **Mark 2: 13-17.** In India today a person of a higher caste must not eat or associate with one of a lower caste. The Jews in Jesus' day were equally strict in their rules about so-called outcast people, particularly on the matter of eating. Why did Jesus associate with this outcast man when it was contrary to the religious practice of the "best people" of his day? In what ways do Christians today show "caste" distinctions in their treatment of the Negro, the foreigner, and those with less money and social standing? What principle determined Jesus' action?

3. **Mark 2: 18-22.** Why did Jesus say his disciples failed to follow the custom about fasting? Why has it often been thought necessary to be sad in order to be religious? What effect did Jesus feel religion should have on a man?

4. **Mark 2: 23-28.** The rules about the Sabbath were particularly strict. To pluck wheat and rub it between the hands

was called reaping and threshing, and therefore gross Sabbath breaking. To heal was also prohibited. What defense did Jesus make of his disciples for breaking the Sabbath laws?

5. **Mark 3: 1-12.** What defense does Jesus make of his action? What did Jesus think it was right to do on the Sabbath? Judging by these two incidents (Mark 2: 23—3: 6) what standard determined Jesus' action? Would this standard apply in determining what is right and wrong in conduct?

6. Remember it was a serious matter to break the religious laws. It was one of the direct causes of Jesus' death. (See Mark 3: 6.) Glance rapidly over this week's readings to see why you think Jesus broke these religious customs of the "best people" of his day. Do you find any standard or ideal by which he acted? If so, what?

7. Glance again over the week's readings. Under what circumstances do you think Jesus would feel a man need not be bound by what is ordinarily considered right or wrong in conduct? What customs, if any, would be changed today if we followed Jesus' ideal? Think about Sunday observance, amusements, race relations, personal habits. How may a Christian determine what to do and what not to do?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Which of a person's standards of what is right and wrong (for instance on amusements, smoking, Sabbath observance, impurity, race relations, and social customs) are due to the influence of custom and public opinion; which to his loyalty to a personal standard he can defend?

2. How far are persons you know willing to go against public opinion in regard to what is right or wrong? Why? When should a man follow the customary standard; when should he refuse to be bound by it?

3. In Jesus' day, to be religious a man must observe minute rules of conduct. Let us examine the incidents recorded where Jesus refused to be bound by the customary religious standards of his day, and see when and why he broke these customs, and on what standards he acted.

a. From these incidents, Mark 2: 1—3: 12 (Sections 1-7), what would you say was the customary religious standard in Jesus' day in each case?

b. What did Jesus give as his defense in each incident for refusing to be bound by the customary standard?

c. From these incidents, how would you say the Scribes and Pharisees determined what was right and wrong? What was

Jesus' standard here for deciding the right action? What was the essential difference between the Scribes and Pharisees and Jesus in their moral and religious standards?

4. What, if any, customary standards of right and wrong of our day would necessarily be broken if we followed Jesus' example? How are these customs hindering the establishment of Jesus' Kingdom in the world?

5. How much dependence should a Christian place upon the moral and religious standards of those about him in determining what is right and wrong in conduct? When, if at all, should he break with current customs and go against public opinion?

6. If a person were to try to follow Jesus' ideal as seen in these incidents, what would you say were some principles or standards by which he would test right or wrong in conduct?

7. How may a Christian determine what to do and what not to do?

CHAPTER V

How Is the Christian Standard of Conduct Different?

Jesus Declares His Ethical Standards

One of the criticisms sometimes flung at a Christian is the fact that he is no better in his conduct than the men who are not professing Christians in his town. The same criticism is frequently leveled at so-called Christian nations. The Scribes and Pharisees went even further in their criticisms of Jesus. They called him a blasphemer and lawbreaker. In what we commonly call "The Sermon on the Mount" he set forth, using several specific examples, what he stood for in moral and religious standards.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Matt. 5: 1-32.

- 1 So when he saw the crowds, he went up the hill and sat
- 2 down; his disciples came up to him and he opened his lips and began to teach them. He said:
- 3 "Blessed are those who feel poor in spirit!
the Realm of heaven is theirs.
- 4 Blessed are the mourners!
they will be consoled.
- 5 Blessed are *the humble!*
they *will inherit the earth.*
- 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for goodness!
they will be satisfied.
- 7 Blessed are the merciful!
they will find mercy.
- 8 Blessed are the pure in heart!
they will see God.
- 9 Blessed are the peacemakers!
they will be ranked sons of God.
- 10 Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of goodness!
the Realm of heaven is theirs.

- 11 Blessed are you when men denounce you and persecute
you and utter all manner of evil against you for my sake;
12 rejoice and exult in it, for your reward is rich in heaven;
that is how they persecuted the prophets before you
- 13 You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes insipid, what can make it salt again? After that it is fit for nothing, fit only to be thrown outside and trodden by the feet of men.
- 14 You are the light of the world. A town on the top of a
15 hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp to put
it under a bowl; they put it on a stand and it shines for
16 all in the house. So your light is to shine before men,
that they may see the good you do and glorify your Father
in heaven.
- 17 Do not imagine I have come to destroy the Law or the
18 prophets; I have not come to destroy but to fulfil. (I tell
you truly, till heaven and earth pass away not an iota, not
a comma, will pass from the Law until it is all in force
Therefore
- 19 whoever relaxes a single one of these commands, were it
even one of the least, and teaches men so,
he will be ranked least in the Realm of heaven;
but whoever obeys them and teaches them,
20 he will be ranked great in the Realm of heaven.) For
I tell you, unless your goodness excels that of the scribes
and Pharisees, you will never get into the Realm of heaven.
- 21 You have heard how the men of old were told, '*Murder*
not:
whoever murders must come up for sentence,
22 whoever maligns his brother must come before the Sanhedrin,
whoever curses his brother must go to the fire of Gehenna.'
- But I tell you, whoever is angry with his brother [without
23 cause] will be sentenced by God. So if you remember, even
when offering your gift at the altar, that your brother has
24 any grievance against you, leave your gift at the very altar
and go away; first be reconciled to your brother, then come
back and offer your gift
- 25 Be quick and make terms with your opponent, so long
as you and he are on the way to court, in case he hands
you over to the judge, and the judge to the jailer, and you
26 are thrown into prison; truly I tell you, you will never get
out till you pay the last halfpenny of your debt.
- 27 You have heard how it used to be said, *Do not commit*
28 *adultery*. But I tell you, any one who even looks with lust
at a woman has committed adultery with her already in
his heart.

- 29 If your right eye is a hindrance to you,
 pluck it out and throw it away:
 better for you to lose one of your members
 than to have all your body thrown into Gehenna.
- 30 And if your right hand is a hindrance to you,
 cut it off and throw it away:
 better for you to lose one of your members
 than to have all your body thrown into Gehenna.
- 31 It used to be said, *Whoever divorces his wife must give*
 32 *her a divorce-certificate.* But I tell you, anyone who di-
 vorces his wife for any reason except unchastity makes her
 an adulteress; and whoever marries a divorced woman com-
 mits adultery.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. Matt. 5: 1-12. Several groups of people are here spoken of as "Blessed." Contrast this with the common idea of those who shall be "Happy"
2. Matt. 5: 1-20. Note what Jesus says in reply to the Pharisees' criticism that he was trying to do away with law and order. What did Jesus say he asked for?
3. Matt. 5: 21-26. This is the first of five examples given by Jesus, which he says show the difference between his standard of what is right and wrong in conduct and that of the Pharisees. From this incident, what would you say was the common standard in Jesus' day regarding murder? How did anger compare with murder in Jesus' standard? Why?
4. Read again Matt. 5: 21-26. Why must a man first make up with his brother, if attending church is to do any good?
5. Matt. 5: 27-32. How did Jesus' idea of purity differ from that commonly accepted? What do you think about Jesus' warning against impure thoughts?
6. Reread Matt. 5: 27-32. How urgent does Jesus make this matter of purity? What do you think about it?
7. Reread rapidly Matt. 5: 1-32. Judging from these incidents, in what one regard would you say Jesus asked for a better standard than the most religious people of his day? Would you, or would you not, expect a similar advance to be necessary when a good respectable citizen in your town becomes a Christian?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Do the people expect higher standards of conduct of a Christian, in your town, than of the ordinarily good and respectable citizen? If so, in what regards? If not, why not?
2. Jesus said he asked for better conduct among his followers

than that of the most religious people of his day. He then gives five examples showing how his followers must be better. We have read two of these examples this week.

a. Judging from these incidents, Matt. 5: 17-32 (Sections 2-7), what would you say was the Pharisees' standard?

b. In what regard did Jesus ask for a higher standard than that of the Pharisees? What do you think of Jesus' emphasis here?

3. If a Christian were to follow Jesus' standard on hatred and purity, how, if at all, would he be different from the ordinarily good citizen in your town?

4. Why did Jesus condemn thinking lust or murder? When a man with lust or murder in his thought refrains from wrong acts what is the reason?

5. Just what keeps a man when away from restraints, or in a strange community, from wrong conduct?

6. Specifically how would you tell a man that becoming a Christian helps a person in his moral conduct?

7. How can a man whose thoughts and motives are all wrong, change his thought life?

CHAPTER VI

How Should a Christian Get Even?

Jesus Establishes a New Type of Revenge

The last two examples given by Jesus have to do with the way a man should treat those who have done him wrong, or who are his enemies. It is often said that Jesus' ideal on these points is utterly impracticable and cannot be worked out in business life, in the treatment of criminals, or in relations between nations. Let us read the incidents and see what we think about this.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Matt. 5: 33-48.

- 33 Once again, you have heard how the men of old were told,
‘*You must not forswear yourself but discharge your vows*
34 *to the Lord.*’ But I tell you, you must not swear any oath,
neither by *heaven*,
for it is *the throne of God*,
35 nor by *earth*,
for it is *the footstool of his feet*,
nor by *Jerusalem*,
for it is *the city of the great King*;
36 nor shall you swear by your head,
for you cannot make a single hair white or black.
37 Let what you say be simply ‘yes’ or ‘no’;
Whatever exceeds that springs from evil.
38 You have heard the saying, *An eye for an eye and a tooth*
for a tooth.
39 But I tell you, you are not to resist an injury:
whoever strikes you on the right cheek,
turn the other to him as well;
40 whoever wants to sue you for your shirt,
let him have your coat as well;
41 Whoever forces you to go one mile,
go two miles with him;
42 give to the man who begs from you,
and turn not away from him who wants to borrow.
43 You have heard the saying, ‘*You must love your neigh-*
44 *bour and hate your enemy.*’ But I tell you, love your ene-

- 45 mies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be
sons of your Father in heaven:
he makes his sun rise on the evil and the good,
and sends rain on the just and the unjust.
- 46 For if you love only those who love you, what reward
do you get for that?
do not the very taxgatherers do as much?
- 47 and if you only salute your friends, what is special about
that?
do not the very pagans do as much?
- 48 *You must be perfect* as your heavenly Father is perfect.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

3. **Matt. 5: 38-42.** The old Mosaic law was "an eye for an eye" Under this law how far could a man go in getting even for an injury or a wrong? How effective is retaliation and revenge?

2. Read **Matt. 5: 38-42** again, noticing Jesus' insistence on giving at least twice as much in good to the man who has done you wrong, "second mile," "other cheek," "cloak also." According to Jesus' standard, how would a man get even with a person who has done him an injury?

3. **Matt. 5: 43-48.** According to the standard of Jesus' day, you could hate your enemy. How far is that allowed today?

4. Reread **Matt. 5: 43-48**, remembering that the word here translated "love," means not the spontaneous love of a man for his wife, or a lover for his sweetheart, but "infinite good will." How far do you think it is possible to show good will toward a former enemy, such as Germany? How? What do you think of Jesus' injunction in verse 48?

5. Read the parallel account in **Luke 6: 27-36**. What reasons does Jesus give for loving one's enemies?

6. Read the fifth example, which is on a different question, namely, oaths. **Matt. 5: 33-37**. In Jesus' day oaths made lying easy. Notice Jesus' demand that a man's word should be reliable.

7. Review the week's readings quickly. Frankly, do you think Jesus' ideal on "getting even" could be followed in the punishment of criminals, or in the treatment of a business competitor who had "done you dirt"? Which standard, the Old Testament standard, or Jesus', was followed in making the peace terms at the close of the Great War?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. According to present-day standards, how far can we go in "getting even" with a man or a nation that has done us wrong?

Just how much retaliation and revenge will modern standards allow?

2. According to the standard of Jesus' day, how far could a man go in getting even or in his treatment of enemies, Matt 5: 38-48 (Sections 1 and 3)? How do the present-day standards on this matter compare with those in Jesus' day?

3. What was Jesus' idea on the treatment of a person who had done you an injury or was your enemy, Matt. 5: 38-48 (Sections 2, 4, and 7)? What did Jesus mean by "not resisting an injury," "other cheek," "coat also," "second mile," "love your enemies"?

4. From your study of these examples, how would you say a person who followed Jesus' ideal would get even with a person who had wronged him? How would he treat an enemy? What reason does Jesus give for this ideal?

5. What hope is there that Jesus' ideal on these matters could be made to work in modern life?

a. Would this ideal work in business, where a competitor had given you a dirty deal, and you had a chance to "get even"? Why, or why not?

b. How far do the tactics of a strike follow the "eye for an eye" method of "getting even"? How far do they follow Jesus' ideal of "turning the other cheek"? Would Jesus' ideals be practicable in the relations of capital and labor? If so, how? If not, why not?

c. What is the basis of deciding a criminal's punishment in our courts today? How far is this according to Jesus' ideal as here expressed? How far is our purpose in the punishment of criminals retribution; how far "good will" to the criminals? How far, if at all, can Jesus' ideal of giving a man his "cloak also" be followed in the punishment of criminals, and society still be protected?

d. How far do our newspapers and those who lead in forming public sentiment follow Jesus' ideal of "good will" in their attitude toward "Reds" who hold opinions which they consider dangerous to the country? Should they follow it?

e. In the peace terms, what evidence do you find of the Old Testament standard of "an eye for an eye"? What evidence do you find of Jesus' ideal of "good will"? How far could Jesus' standard be followed in the peace terms, and still insure safety for the world? How can we express "good will" to former enemies, like Germany or Hungary?

6. In what aspects of modern life do you believe that the ideal

of Jesus on these matters is practicable; in what aspects of modern life do you feel it is impracticable?

7. If the individual, the nation, and the world, were seriously to attempt to embody Jesus' ideal as here expressed, what are some of the most outstanding changes which would be necessary?

CHAPTER VII

What Is Wrong with "Bluffing" and "Knocking"?

Jesus Attacks Sham and Tells How to Test Religion

Jesus early ran against insincerity and the critical spirit of the religious leaders of his day. They were appearing to be what they were not, and they attacked persons who refused to follow their rules. Jesus did not leave the people in the dark as to why he felt that such religious acts as the prescribed fasting, praying, and giving to charity did not necessarily prove men to be religious. He made plain what he considered the test of true religion. Those who are concerned with organizations where folks have to work together, whether business, social, or religious, know the effect of "bluffing" and "knocking" upon the morale of the group and will be interested in Jesus' distinction between "professing" and "doing."

BIBLE REFERENCES

Matt. 6: 1-8, 16-24.

- 1 Take care not to practise your charity before men in order to be noticed; otherwise you get no reward from your Father in heaven. No,
- 2 When you give alms,
make no flourish of trumpets like the hypocrites in the synagogues and the streets,
so as to win applause from men;
I tell you truly, they do get their reward.
- 3 When you give alms,
do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,
- 4 so as to keep your alms secret;
then your Father who sees what is secret will reward you openly.
- 5 Also, when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, for they like to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street-corners,
so as to be seen by men;
I tell you truly, they do get their reward.

- 6 When you pray,
 go into your room and shut the door,
 pray to your Father who is in secret,
 and your Father who sees what is secret will reward
 you.
- 7 Do not pray by idle rote like pagans,
 for they suppose they will be heard the more they say;
- 8 you must not copy them;
 your Father knows your needs before you ask him. . . .
- 16 When you fast,
 do not look gloomy like the hypocrites,
 for they look woebegone to let men see they are fasting;
 I tell you truly, they do get their reward.
- 17 But when you fast,
 anoint your head and wash your face,
- 18 so that your fast may be seen not by them but by your
 Father who is in secret,
 and your Father who sees what is secret will reward
 you.
- 19 Store up no treasures for yourselves on earth,
 where moth and rust corrode,
 where thieves break in and steal.
- 20 store up treasures for yourselves in heaven,
 where neither moth nor rust corrode.
 where thieves do not break in and steal.
- 21 For where your treasure lies,
 your heart will lie there too.
- 22 The eye is the lamp of the body:
 so, if your Eye is generous,
 the whole of your body will be illumined,
- 23 but if your Eye is selfish,
 the whole of your body will be darkened.
 And if your very light turns dark,
 then—what a darkness it is!
- 24 No one can serve two masters:
 either he will hate one and love the other,
 or else he will stand by the one and despise the other—
 you cannot serve both God and Mammon.

Matt. 7: 1-29.

- 1 Judge not, that you may not be judged yourselves;
2 for as you judge so you will be judged,
 and the measure you deal out to others will be dealt out to
 yourselves.
- 3 Why do you note the splinter in your brother's eye and
4 fail to see the plank in your own eye? How can you say
 to your brother, 'Let me take out the splinter from your

- 5 eye,' when there lies the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite! take the plank out of your own eye first, and then you will see properly how to take the splinter out of your brother's eye.
- 6 Do not give dogs what is sacred and do not throw pearls before swine, in case they trample them under foot and turn to gore you.
- 7 Ask and the gift will be yours,
 seek and you will find,
 knock and the door will open to you;
- 8 for every one who asks receives,
 the seeker finds,
 the door is opened to anyone who knocks.
- 9 Why, which of you, when asked by his son for a loaf, will hand him a stone?
- 10 Or, if he asks a fish, will you hand him a serpent?
- 11 Well, if for all your evil you know to give your children what is good,
 how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him?
- 12 Well then, whatever you would like men to do to you, do just the same to them; that is the meaning of the Law and the prophets.
- 13 Enter by the narrow gate:
 for [the gate] is broad and the road is wide that leads to destruction,
 and many enter that way.
- 14 But the road that leads to life is both narrow and close,
 and there are few who find it.
- 15 Beware of false prophets; they come to you with the garb of sheep but at heart they are ravenous wolves.
- 16 You will know them by their fruit; do men gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles? No,
- 17 every good tree bears sound fruit,
 but a rotten tree bears bad fruit;
- 18 a good tree cannot bear bad fruit,
 and a rotten tree cannot bear sound fruit.
- 20 So you will know them by their fruit. Any tree that
- 19 does not produce sound fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.
- 21 It is not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord!' who will get into the Realm of heaven, but he who does the will
- 22 of my Father in heaven. Many will say to me at that Day. 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? did we not cast out daemons in your name? did we not perform many
- 23 miracles in your name?' Then I will declare to them, 'I

never knew you; *depart from my presence, you workers of iniquity.*'

- 24 Now, everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts upon them will be like a sensible man who built his
25 house on rock. The rain came down, the floods rose, the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall,
26 for it was founded on rock. And everyone who listens to these words of mine and does not act upon them will be
27 like a stupid man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the floods rose, the winds blew and beat upon that house, and down it fell—with a mighty crash.”
28 When Jesus finished his speech, the crowds were as
29 founded at his teaching; for he taught them like an authority, not like their own scribes.

Luke 7: 1-50.

- 1 When he had finished what he had to say in the hearing of the people, he went into Capharnahum
2 Now there was an army-captain who had a servant ill whom he valued very highly. This man was at the point
3 of death; so, when the captain heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and make
4 his servant well. When they reached Jesus they asked him earnestly to do this. “He deserves to have this favour
5 from you,” they said, “for he is a lover of our nation; it was he who built our synagogue.” So Jesus went with
6 them. But he was not far from the house when the captain sent some friends to tell him, “Do not trouble yourself,
7 sir, I am not fit to have you under my roof, and so I did not consider myself fit even to come to you. Just say the word,
8 and let my servant be cured. For though I am a man under authority myself, I have soldiers under me; I tell one man to go, and he goes, I tell another to come, and he comes,
9 I tell my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” When Jesus heard this he marvelled at him, and turning to the crowd that followed he said, “I tell you, I have never met faith
10 like this anywhere even in Israel.” Then the messengers went back to the house and found the sick servant was quite well.
11 It was shortly afterwards that he made his way to a town called Nain, accompanied by his disciples and a large crowd.
12 Just as he was near the gate of the town, there was a dead man being carried out; he was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. A large crowd from the town were
13 with her. And when the Lord saw her, he felt pity for her and said to her, “Do not weep.” Then he went forward and touched the bier; the bearers stopped, and he

15 said, "Young man, I bid you rise." Then the corpse sat up and began to speak; and Jesus gave him back to his mother.
16 All were seized with awe and glorified God. "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said, "God has visited
17 his people." And this story of Jesus spread through the whole of Judaea and all the surrounding country.

18 John's disciples reported all this to him. So John summoned two of his disciples and sent them to ask the Lord,
19 "Are you the Coming One? Or are we to look out for someone else?" When the men reached Jesus they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask if you are the Coming
20 One or if we are to look out for someone else?" Jesus at that moment was healing many people of diseases and complaints and evil spirits; he also bestowed sight on many
21 blind folk. So he replied, "Go and report to John what you have seen and heard; that *the blind see*, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and
22 *to the poor the gospel is preached*. And blessed is he who
23 is repelled by nothing in me!" When John's messengers had gone, he proceeded to speak to the crowds about John:
24 "What did you go out to the desert to see?

A reed swayed by the wind?

25 Come, what did you go out to see?

A man arrayed in soft robes?

Those who are gorgeously dressed and luxurious live in royal palaces

26 Come, what did you go out to see? A prophet?

Yes, I tell you, and far more than a prophet.

27 This is he of whom it is written,

*Here I send my messenger before your face,
to prepare the way for you.*

28 I tell you, among the sons of women there is none greater than John, and yet the least in the Realm of God is greater
29 than he is." (On hearing this all the people and the tax-gatherers acknowledged the justice of God, as they had been
30 baptized with the baptism of John; but the Pharisees and jurists, who had refused his baptism, frustrated God's purpose for themselves.)

31 "To what then shall I compare the men of this generation? what are they like?

32 Like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another,

'We piped to you and you would not dance,
we lamented and you would not weep.'

33 For John the Baptist has come, eating no bread and drinking no wine,
and you say, 'He has a devil';

- 34 the Son of man has come eating and drinking,
and you say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard,
a friend of taxgatherers and sinners!'
- 35 Nevertheless, Wisdom is vindicated by all her children.'
- 36 One of the Pharisees asked him to dinner, and entering
37 the house of the Pharisee he reclined at table. Now there
was a woman in the town who was a sinner, and when she
found out that Jesus was at table in the house of the
38 Pharisee she brought an alabaster flask of perfume and
stood behind him at his feet in tears; her tears began to
wet his feet, so she wiped them with the hair of her head
pressed kisses on them, and anointed them with the per-
39 fume. When his host the Pharisee noticed this, he said to
himself, "If he was a prophet he would know what sort
of a woman this is who is touching him; for she is a sinner."
- 40 Then Jesus addressed him. "Simon," he said, "I have some-
41 thing to say to you." "Speak, teacher," he said. "There
was a moneylender who had two debtors; one owed him
42 fifty pounds, the other five. As they were unable to pay
he freely forgave them both. Tell me, now, which of them
43 will love him most?" "I suppose," said Simon, "the man
44 who had most forgiven." "Quite right," he said. Then
turning to the woman he said to Simon, "You see this
woman? When I came into your house,
you never gave me water for my feet,
while she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them
with her hair;
45 you never gave me a kiss,
while ever since she came in she has wept pressing
kisses on my feet;
46 you never anointed my head with oil,
while she has anointed my feet with perfume.
47 Therefore I tell you, many as her sins are, they are for-
given, for her love is great; whereas he to whom little is
48 forgiven has but little love." And he said to her, "Your
49 sins are forgiven." His fellow guests began to say to them-
50 selves, "Who is this, to forgive even sins?" But he said to
the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. Matt. 6: 1-4. Why does a man who parades his good acts, or the man who boasts of his bravery in the service, secure contempt? What, according to Jesus, was wrong with "doing your righteousness to be seen of men"? Why were the Pharisees so careful to be sure they got credit for all their good acts? What example of this have you found today?

2. **Matt. 6: 5-24.** What was the reason the Pharisees prayed in public and wore sad faces when they fasted? Why are you suspicious of a man who poses as being religious? What was wrong according to Jesus with the motive of the Pharisees when they fasted, prayed, and gave to charity? How can a man keep his motives single?

3. **Matt. 7: 1-6.** Why can't a man who "knocks" see his own faults? Why should he? Notice that in each incident Jesus calls the men "hypocrites." What was it in their actions that made him call them "hypocrites"?

4. **Matt. 7: 7-15.** Paraphrase the Golden Rule in modern style. How far do you think it can be followed as the test of whether or not a person is religious?

5. **Matt. 7: 16-29.** What is the difference between "professing" and "doing" in religion? When does "hearing" result in action? Why should Jesus say that a man who hears without doing is like a man who builds his house upon sand?

6. **Luke 7: 1-35.** What was it about this Roman army officer that Jesus called faith? On what evidence did Jesus ask John to believe his genuineness? Can your religion meet that test?

7. **Luke 7: 36-50.** Why did the Pharisees want to refuse religion to this woman? On what ground did Jesus say she should be counted religious?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Give examples in modern life of people doing things for the sake of effect. What do we mean by "bluffing"?

2. Why did Jesus call the Pharisees, who did their praying, fasting, and charity "to be seen of men," hypocrites? **Matt. 6: 1-24** (Sections 1 and 2). Would you or would you not call a "bluffer" a hypocrite? Why?

3. What did Jesus have to say about the person who picks flaws in others? **Matt. 7: 1-6** (Section 3). How true to life, as you have found it, is Jesus' observation here?

4. What did Jesus have to say about those who hear, who profess, and who do? **Matt. 7: 7-29** (Sections 4 and 5). Why was Jesus willing to have John test his reliability by his acts? **Luke 7: 18-28** (Section 6). How far do you judge a man by what he says he is, how far by what his acts seem to show him to be? Why is the man who can always be counted upon so much in demand?

6. Would you think Jesus' story about the house built on the rock and on the sand, **Matt 7: 24-29** (Section 5), would apply to a man in a business concern or to a worker in a church? If so, how?

7. How truly would you say a man's acts are a picture of what he is? Give examples you have seen where a person's acts were a true picture, and examples where his acts did not represent the person.

8. How valuable to a team or an organization is a man who plays to the "grand stand"? Why?

9. What effect do "bluffing" and "knocking" have upon the morale of a business or an industrial concern? Upon the government of a community? In a church? Why?

10. What effect would the adoption of the Golden Rule have upon the effectiveness of the work within such an organization? Can this be made to work out as the basis of business and political life as well as of religious organizations?

CHAPTER VIII

What Is Jesus' Cause in the World?

Jesus' Points of Emphasis Regarding the Kingdom of God

Every man who is making his life really count in the world has a cause. During the War, the winning of the War was the great cause of many nations. Today the League of Nations, the support of a political party, industrial democracy, the making of money, right race relationships, world-wide growth of Christianity, each represents the cause for a great group of people. The man who has become a Christian has pledged his loyalty to Jesus and his cause in the world. It is worth while, therefore, to learn about Jesus' cause—the Kingdom of God.

While Jesus refused to follow literally the ideas of his people, we have, nevertheless, found that he gave himself to this cause of his nation, the Kingdom of God (see Chapter I, page 4). In studying this lesson, we must remember that Jesus assumed a general understanding of the term "Kingdom of God" just as a speaker today would assume an understanding of the term "democracy." Whenever Jesus used the expression "Kingdom of God," every listener thought at once of an ideal state of society where peace, prosperity, and righteousness would prevail under the reign of God.

Our interest is in finding the points of emphasis made by Jesus which may show where he differed from the current conception. In this study we must keep in mind not only the immediate readings, but the whole focus of his teachings as thus far given.

We will follow most of this week the Matthew account rather than the briefer record in Mark.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Matt. 13: 1-9, 18-46.

- 1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and seated
- 2 himself by the seaside; but, as great crowds gathered to him, he entered a boat and sat down, while all the crowd
- 3 stood on the beach. He spoke at some length to them in

4 parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow, and as he sowed some seeds fell on the road and the birds came and
5 ate them up. Some other seeds fell on stony soil where they had not much earth, and shot up at once because they had
6 no depth of soil; but when the sun rose they got scorched
7 and withered away because they had no root. Some other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and
8 choked them. Some other seeds fell on good soil and bore a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirtyfold.
9 He who has an ear, let him listen to this." . . .

18 Now, listen to the parable of the sower. When anyone
19 hears the word of the Realm and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart; that is the man who is sown 'on the road.'
20 As for him who is sown 'on stony soil,' that is the man who hears the word and accepts it at once with enthusiasm;
21 he has no root in himself, he does not last, but when the word brings trouble or persecution he is at once repelled.
22 As for him who is sown 'among thorns,' that is the man who listens to the word, but the worry of the world and the delight of being rich choke the word; so it proves un-
23 fruitful. As for him who is sown 'on good soil,' that is the man who hears the word and understands it; he bears fruit, producing now a hundredfold, now sixty, and now thirtyfold."

24 He put another parable before them. "The Realm of heaven," he said, "is like a man who sowed good seed in
25 his field, but while men slept his enemy came and resowed
26 weeds among the wheat and then went away. When the blade sprouted and formed the kernel, then the weeds ap-
27 peared as well. So the servants of the owner went to him and said, 'Did you not sow good seed in your field, sir?
28 How then does it contain weeds?' He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Then
29 would you like us to go and gather them?' 'No,' he said, 'for you might root up the wheat when you were gathering
30 the weeds. Let them both grow side by side till harvest; and at harvest-time I will tell the reapers to gather the
weeds first and tie them in bundles to be burnt, but to collect the wheat in my granary.'"

31 He put another parable before them. "The Realm of heaven," he said, "is like a grain of mustard-seed which a
32 man takes and sows in his field. It is less than any seed on earth, but when it grows up it is larger than any plant, it becomes a tree, so large that *the wild birds come and roost in its branches.*"

33 He told them another parable. "The Realm of heaven,"

he said, "is like dough which a woman took and buried in three pecks of flour, till all of it was leavened."

34 Jesus said all this to the crowds in parables; he never
35 spoke to them except in a parable—to fulfil what had been said by the prophet,

*I will open my mouth in parables,
I will speak out what has been hidden since the foundation of the world*

36 Then he left the crowds and went indoors. And his disciples came up to him saying, "Explain to us the parable of
37 the weeds in the field." So he replied, "He who sows the
38 good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed means the sons of the Realm; the weeds are the sons
39 of the evil one; the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are
40 angels. Well then, just as the weeds are gathered and burnt
41 in the fire, so will it be at the end of the world; the Son of man will despatch his angels, and they will gather out of his
Realm all who are hindrances and who practise iniquity,
42 and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will
43 wail and gnash their teeth. Then the just will shine like the sun in the Realm of their Father. He who has an ear, let him listen to this.

44 The Realm of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field; the man who finds it hides it and in his delight goes and sells all he possesses and buys that field.

45 Again, the Realm of heaven is like a trader in search of
46 fine pearls; when he finds a single pearl of high price, he is off to sell all he possesses and buy it."

Mark 4: 26-29.

26 And he said, "It is with the Realm of God as when a
27 man has sown seed on earth; he sleeps at night and rises by day, and the seed sprouts and shoots up—he knows not
28 how. (For the earth bears crops by itself, the blade first, the ear of corn next, and then the grain full in the ear.)
29 But whenever the crop is ready, he has the sickle put in at once, as harvest has come."

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. Matt. 13: 1-9; 18-23. How far is Jesus' classification of folks in this parable true to present-day experience in asking men to respond to any great cause? Which of these four classes are slackers?

2. Matt. 13: 24-30. How do disloyal persons in a cause pass for loyal ones?

3. **Matt. 13: 31-35.** What evidence had Jesus that his cause would succeed? How would it succeed?

4. **Matt. 13: 36-43.** What new light does Jesus' explanation throw on the kind of a cause he had?

5. **Matt. 13: 44-46.** How much value did Jesus place upon his cause?

6. Read rapidly through the Mark account, **Mark 4: 1-34.** Note especially **Mark 4: 26-29**, not found in Matthew. What does this emphasize as to the growth of Jesus' cause? Is this true to life?

7. Glance over your week's reading, and jot down what seem to be the principal points of emphasis which Jesus makes in regard to the Kingdom of God.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What are some of the causes to which persons are giving their lives?

2. What is a cause? What is the Christian cause?

3. For religious Jews, the chief cause was the Kingdom of God. What was the Jewish idea of the Kingdom of God?

4. Among his hearers were those who expected the Kingdom to come suddenly and miraculously; and others who thought it would be achieved by military revolution. In contrast, what does Jesus give as the method by which the Kingdom would come? What points of emphasis does Jesus make as to the Kingdom of God? **Matt. 13: 1-9; 18-46; Mark 4: 26-29** (Sections 1-7).

5. Christians today say they are working for the establishment of the Kingdom of God. What do they mean?

6. In Jesus' day, the Kingdom of God represented an ideal state of society where peace, prosperity, and righteousness would prevail. Would you or would you not say that those who are giving their lives for such causes as the uplifting of the poor, better chance for criminals, right race relationships, the elimination of child labor, are working for the Kingdom of God?

7. Where is this Kingdom of God to be set up, in the hearts of men or in society?

8. What is the difference, if any, between the Church and the Kingdom of God? In how far is the Church the Kingdom of God and how far is it a means of helping bring the Kingdom? To what extent would you say the establishment of the Kingdom of God is the chief aim of the Church? What evidence have you of this?

9 What about working for the Kingdom of God will make the strongest appeal to the loyalty of men today? Why does it fail to bring this appeal?

10. Do Christians really believe that present business, industrial, and political life can be made a part of the Kingdom of God? What reason have you for your answer?

11. Judging by the success thus far achieved, how much hope is there that our present economic, political, and international dealings can be made Christian? If Christianity will not work in these social relationships, would you or would you not still believe in it as the true religion? Why?

12 What aspects of our social, industrial, political, and international life must be changed if they are to be a part of the Kingdom of God? Just how much real effort and sacrifice will be necessary to accomplish this?

CHAPTER IX

What Makes Religion Stand the Test?

Jesus Shows the Essentials in Everyday Religion

The remarkable characteristic of the religion of Jesus was the way it stood the tests of actual life. Demand is being made upon religion today as never before, to meet the test of everyday life. Therefore it will be of interest to find what Jesus felt was essential in everyday religion, if it is to meet the strain and stress of life.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Mark 4: 35-41.

35 That same day when evening came he said to them,
36 "Let us cross to the other side;" so, leaving the crowd,
they took him just as he was in the boat, accompanied by
37 some other boats. But a heavy squall of wind came on,
and the waves splashed into the boat, so that the boat
38 filled. He was sleeping on the cushion in the stern, so they
woke him up saying, "Teacher, are we to drown, for all
39 you care?" And he woke up, checked the wind, and told
the sea, "Peace, be quiet." The wind fell and there was
40 a great calm. Then he said to them, "Why are you afraid
41 like this? Have you no faith yet?" But they were over-
awed and said to each other, "Whatever can he be, when
the very wind and sea obey him?"

Mark 5: 21-43.

21 Now when Jesus had crossed in the boat to the other
side again, a large crowd gathered round him; so he
22 remained beside the sea. A president of the synagogue
called Jairus came up, and on catching sight of him fell
23 at his feet with earnest entreaties. "My little girl is dy-
ing," he said, "do come and lay your hands on her that
24 she may recover and live." So Jesus went away with him.
Now a large crowd followed him; they pressed round him.
25 And there was a woman who had had a hemorrhage for
26 twelve years—she had suffered a great deal under a num-

ber of doctors and had spent all her means but was none
 27 the better; in fact she was rather worse. She heard about
 Jesus, got behind him in the crowd, and touched his robe;
 28 "If I can touch even his clothes," she said to herself,
 29 "I will recover." And at once the hemorrhage stopped,
 and she felt in her body that she was cured of her complaint.
 30 Jesus was at once conscious that some healing virtue had
 passed from him, so he turned round in the crowd and
 31 asked, "Who touched my clothes?" His disciples said
 to him, "You see the crowd are pressing round you,
 32 and yet you ask, 'Who touched me?'" But he kept
 33 looking round to see who had done it, and the
 woman, knowing what had happened to her, came forward
 in fear and trembling and fell down before him, telling
 34 him all the truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith
 has made you well; go in peace and be free from your
 35 complaint." He was still speaking when a message came
 from the house of the synagogue-president, "Your daughter
 is dead. Why trouble the teacher to come any further?"
 36 Instantly Jesus ignored the remark and told the president,
 37 "Have no fear, only believe." He would not allow anyone
 to accompany him except Peter and James and John the
 38 brother of James. So they reached the president's house,
 where he saw a tumult of people wailing and making shrill
 39 lament; and on entering he asked them, "Why make a
 40 noise and wail? The child is not dead but asleep." They
 laughed at him. However, he put them all outside and
 taking the father and mother of the child as well as his
 41 companions he went in to where the child was lying; then
 he took the child's hand and said to her, "Talitha koum"
 —which may be translated, "Little girl, I am telling you
 42 to rise." The girl got up at once and began to walk (she
 was twelve years old); and at once they were lost in utter
 43 amazement. But he strictly forbade them to let anyone know
 about it, and told them to give her something to eat.

Mark 6: 1-16, 30, 31.

1 Leaving there he went to his native place, followed by
 2 his disciples. When the sabbath came, he began to teach
 in the synagogue, and the large audience was astounded.
 "Where did he get all this?" they said. "What is the
 meaning of this wisdom he is endowed with? And these
 3 miracles, too, that his hands perform! Is this not the joiner,
 the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joses
 4 and Judas and Simon? Are not his sisters settled here
 among us?" So they were repelled by him. Then Jesus
 said to them, "A prophet never goes without honour except

in his native place and among his kinsfolk and in his home." There he could not do any miracle, beyond laying his hands on a few sick people and curing them. He was astonished at their lack of faith.

Then he made a tour round the villages, teaching. And summoning the twelve he proceeded to send them out two by two; he gave them power over the unclean spirits, and ordered them to take nothing but a stick for the journey, no bread, no wallet, no coppers in their girdle; they were to wear sandals, but not to put on two shirts, he said.

Also, he told them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there till you leave the place. And if any place will not receive you and the people will not listen to you, shake off the very dust under your feet when you leave as a warning to them." So they went out and preached repentance; also they cast out a number of daemons and cured a number of sick people by anointing them with oil.

Now this came to the hearing of king Herod, for the name of Jesus had become well known; people said, "John the Baptizer has risen from the dead, that is why miraculous powers are working through him"; others said, "It is Elijah," others again, "It is a prophet, like one of the old prophets." But when Herod heard of it he said, "John has risen, the John I beheaded."

Now the apostles gathered to meet Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. And he said to them, "Come away to some lonely spot and get a little rest" (for there were many people coming and going, and they could get no time even to eat).

Mark 7: 1-23.

Now the Pharisees gathered to meet him, with some scribes who had come from Jerusalem. They noticed that some of his disciples ate their food with 'common' (that is, unwashed) hands. (The Pharisees and all the Jews decline to eat till they wash their hands up to the wrist, in obedience to the tradition of the elders; they decline to eat what comes from the market till they have washed it; and they have a number of other traditions to keep about washing cups and jugs and basins [and beds]). Then the Pharisees and scribes put this question to him, "Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders? Why do they take their food with 'common' hands?" He said to them, "Isaiah made a grand prophecy about you hypocrites—as it is written,

*This people honours me with their lips,
but their heart is far away from me:*

- 7 *vain is their worship of me,*
 for the doctrines they teach are but human precepts.
- 8 You drop what God commands and hold to human tradi-
 9 tion. Yes, forsooth," he added, "you set aside what God
 10 commands, so as to maintain your own tradition. Thus,
 11 Moses said, *Honour your father and mother*, and, *He who*
 12 *curses his father or mother is to suffer death.* But you
 13 say that if a man tells his father or mother, 'This money
 14 might have been at your service, but it is Korban' (that
 15 is, dedicated to God), he is exempt, so you hold, from
 16 doing anything for his father or mother. That is repeal-
 17 ing the word of God in the interests of the tradition which
 18 you keep on. And you do many things like that." Then he
 19 called the crowd to him again and said to them, "Listen to
 20 me, all of you, and understand this:—
 21 nothing outside a man can defile him by entering him;
 22 it is what comes from him that defiles him.
 23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen to this."
 24 Now when he went indoors away from the crowd, his
 25 disciples asked him the meaning of this parabolic saying.
 26 He said to them, "So you do not understand, either? Do
 27 you not see how nothing outside a man can defile him by
 28 entering him? It does not enter his heart but his belly
 29 and passes from that into the drain" (thus he pronounced
 30 all food clean). "No," he said, "it is what comes from a
 31 man, that is what defiles him. From within, from the heart
 32 of man, the designs of evil come: sexual vice, stealing, mur-
 33 der, adultery, lust, malice, deceit, sensuality, envying, slander,
 34 arrogance, recklessness, all these evils issue from within and
 35 they defile a man."

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. Mark 4: 35-41. What made the difference between Jesus and his disciples in their conduct in the danger of the storm? How does real confidence in God affect a man's action in danger?
2. Mark 5: 21-43. "Fear not, only believe." "Your faith has made you well." Compare Matt. 9: 27-31. "As you believe." What is meant by "believe," "faith"? Read also the connecting incident, Mark 5:1-20, not printed out here.
3. Mark 6: 1-6. Why did Jesus' townspeople speak slightly of his ability? Why could not Jesus help people when they refused to believe in him? Just how much is belief necessary before one person can help another—belief in a doctor, for instance? What is it to believe in another?
4. Mark 6: 7-13, 30, 31. Why did Jesus send out the twelve? Was their errand a religious one? Why do you say so?

5. Mark 6: 14-16. On what ground did Herod think John was risen from the dead when he heard of the work of Jesus?

6. Mark 7: 1-16. The Pharisees continued to harass Jesus because they were angry that he and his disciples persisted in openly disregarding their most revered rules and customs. In the incident here recorded, Jesus speaks even more sharply than on previous occasions. Why did he say that following their customs failed to make them religious? In what regards does this hold true today?

7. Mark 7: 17-23. Jesus felt keenly enough on this question to be willing to make himself an outlaw in the sight of the religious leaders of his day. Just what does he say will make religion stand the test?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. In becoming a Christian and a church member, give examples of things people are required to do which they did not do before and things which they are required to give up which they did previously. What emphasis is placed upon "Do's" and "Don'ts" in religion?

2. What did Jesus find wrong with the emphasis upon rules and traditions in the religion of his day? Where did Jesus place the emphasis in religion? Mark 7: 1-23 (Sections 6 and 7).

3. In your observation, is a religion that is founded upon rules and customs powerless in the time of testing or sudden emergency? Why or why not?

4. What do you think of Jesus' emphasis upon the "heart"? Mark 7: 1-23 (Sections 6 and 7). When a person meets a sudden test, what determines how he will act? If the "heart" is right, can the action be wrong? When? "Can a man possess such virtues as generosity, purity, truthfulness, and self-sacrifice, without being religious? Can a man be religious without possessing such virtues?" (Quoted from Bosworth-Lobingier's "The Master's Way").

5. What emphasis did Jesus place upon faith and belief? Mark 4: 35-41; 5: 1-43 (Sections 1 and 2). What is faith?

6. What is the relation of faith to action? If a man believes something, will he always do it? Why do you make your answer?

7. How does the faith in God essential in religion differ from the faith in officers necessary for success in a great battle?

8. What is the test of the power of religion? How far is the power of religion tested by what you have become, and how far

by how much better you are than you were? Under what, if any, circumstances might one man act worse than another, and still be more genuinely religious?

9. What qualities in religion are necessary if it is to stand the test of everyday life?

CHAPTER X

How Shall We Treat Other Races and Nationalities?

Jesus, a Fugitive, Breaks with Jewish Narrowness

The events thus far, with the exception of Jesus' visit to the temple at twelve and his answer to John's call and the ensuing wilderness crisis, occurred in the vicinity of the Sea of Galilee. In this chapter we have the record of a hasty journey to Tyre and Sidon and through Decapolis. The chances are that Jesus was driven out of Galilee by the bitter hostility of the religious leaders. On this journey an incident occurs which makes it necessary for him to face directly whether he will be bound by the narrow religious and racial prejudices of his people. We shall study this incident and some material from other parts of the record to see what attitude Jesus took on this matter.

Class, racial, and national prejudices are a repeated cause of friction and disorder today. Such prejudices were particularly strong among the Jews. Any person not a Jew was an outcaste. He could come into possession of the true religion of the Jews only by becoming a Jew. What attitude did Jesus take? Are we today true to the example and the spirit of Jesus in our treatment of those of other races and nationalities?

BIBLE REFERENCES

Mark 7: 24-37.

24 Leaving there, he went away to the territory of Tyre and Sidon. He went into a house and wished no one to know
25 of it, but he could not escape notice; a woman heard of him, whose daughter had an unclean spirit, and she came
26 in and fell at his feet (the woman was a pagan, of Syro-phoenician birth) begging him to cast the daemon out of
27 her daughter. He said to her, "Let the children be satisfied first of all; it is not fair to take the children's bread
28 and throw it to the dogs." She answered him, "No, sir, but under the table the dogs do pick up the children's
29 crumbs." He said to her, "Well, go your way; the daemon
30 has left your daughter, since you have said that." So she

went home and found the child lying in bed and the daemon gone from her

- 31 He left the territory of Tyre again and passed through
32 Sidon to the sea of Galilee, crossing the territory of Decap-
33 olis. And a deaf man who stammered was brought to
34 him, with the request that he would lay his hand on him.
35 So taking him aside from the crowd by himself, he put his
36 fingers into the man's ears, touched his tongue with saliva,
37 and looking up to heaven with a sigh he said to him,
38 "Ephphatha" (which means, Open). Then his ears were [at
39 once] opened and his tongue freed from its fetter—he began
40 to speak correctly. Jesus forbade them to tell anyone
41 about it, but the more he forbade them the more eagerly
42 they made it public; they were astounded in the extreme,
43 saying, "How splendidly he has done everything! He ac-
44 tually makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak!"

Mark 8: 1-21.

- 1 In those days when a large crowd had again gathered
2 and when they had nothing to eat, he called his dis-
3 ciples and said to them, "I am sorry for the crowd; they
4 have been three days with me now, and they have nothing
5 to eat. If I send them home without food they will faint
6 on the road. Besides, some of them have come a long
7 way." His disciples replied, "Where can one get loaves
8 to satisfy them in a desert spot like this?" He asked
9 them, "How many loaves have you got?" They said,
10 "Seven." So he ordered the crowd to recline on the
11 ground, and taking the seven loaves he gave thanks, broke
12 them, and gave them to his disciples to serve out. They
13 served them out to the crowd, and as they also had a few
14 small fish, he blessed them too and told the disciples to
15 serve them out as well. So the people ate and were satis-
16 fied, and they picked up seven baskets of fragments which
17 were left over. (There were about four thousand of them.)
18 Then he sent them away, embarked at once in the boat
19 with his disciples, and went to the district of Dal-
20 manutha.
21 Now the Pharisees came out and started to argue with
22 him, asking him for a Sign from heaven, by way of tempt-
23 ing him. But he sighed in spirit and said,
24 "Why does this generation demand a Sign?"
25 I tell you truly, no Sign shall be given this generation."
26 Then he left them, embarked again, and went away to the
27 opposite side.
28 They had forgotten to bring any bread, and had only one
29 loaf with them in the boat. So he cautioned them, "See

and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven
 16 of Herod." "Leaven?" they argued to themselves, "we
 17 have no bread at all." He noted this and said to them,
 "Why do you argue you have no bread? Do you not see,
 do you not understand, even yet? Are you still dull of
 heart?"

18 You have eyes, do you not see?
 you have ears, do you not hear?

19 Do you not remember how many baskets full of fragments
 you picked up when I broke the five loaves for the five
 20 thousand?" They said, "Twelve." "And how many basket-
 fuls of fragments did you pick up when I broke the seven
 21 loaves for the four thousand?" They said, "Seven." "Do
 you not understand now?" he said.

Luke 4: 24-27.

24 He added, "I tell you truly, no prophet is ever welcome
 25 in his native place. I tell you for a fact,

In Israel there were many widows during the days of
 Elijah,

when the sky was closed for three years and six
 months,

when a great famine came over all the land:

26 yet Elijah was not sent to any of these,
 but only *to a widow woman of Zarephath in Sidon.*

27 And in Israel there were many lepers in the time of the
 prophet Elisha,

Yet none of these was cleansed.

but only Naaman the Syrian."

Matt. 10: 5-7.

5 These twelve men Jesus despatched with the following
 6 instructions, "Do not go among the Gentiles, rather make
 7 your way to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And
 preach as you go, tell men, "The Reign of heaven is near.'"

Luke 10: 25-37.

25 Now a jurist got up to tempt him. "Teacher," he said,
 26 "what am I to do to inherit life eternal?" He said to him,
 "What is written in the law? What do you read there?"
 27 He replied, "*You must love the Lord your God with your
 whole heart, with your whole soul, with your whole strength,
 and with your whole mind. Also your neighbor as your-
 28 self.*" "A right answer!" said Jesus; "*do that and you will
 29 live*" Anxious to make an excuse for himself, however, he
 30 said to Jesus, "But who is my neighbour?" Jesus rejoined,
 "A man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among
 robbers who stripped and belaboured him and then went

31 off leaving him half-dead. Now it so chanced that a priest
32 was going down the same road, but on seeing him he went
33 past on the opposite side. So did a Levite who came to the
34 spot; he looked at him but passed on the opposite side. How-
35 ever a Samaritan traveller came to where he was and felt
36 pity when he saw him; he went to him, bound his wounds
37 up, pouring oil and wine into them, mounted him on
his own steed, took him to an inn, and attended to him.
Next morning he took out a couple of shillings and gave
them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Attend to him, and if you
are put to any extra expense I will refund you on my way
back.' Which of these three men, in your opinion, proved a
neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers?" He
said, "The man who took pity on him." Jesus said to him,
"Then go and do the same."

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Mark 7: 24-30.** The probabilities are that Jesus was practically driven from Galilee by the Jewish leaders and is here a fugitive. What was the significance of Jesus' listening to the appeal of a Greek woman? Why would not an orthodox Jew have done this?

2. **Mark 7: 31-37.** Look on the map and see the extent of Jesus' journey. Notice the comment of the crowd: "How splendidly he has done everything."

3. Glance quickly through the incidents recorded in **Mark 8: 1-21.** This is connecting material, not directly on the week's topic. Notice especially Jesus' answer to the appeal of need and his warning concerning the teachings of the Pharisees.

4. We have already considered the incidents of Jesus' visit to his home town. Read the latter part of this incident, **Luke 4: 24-27.** When the people in Jesus' home town were doubtful about him, Jesus seems, from the illustration he gave, to say that foreigners might receive him.

5. Compare Jesus' instructions to his disciples, **Matt. 10: 5-7.** How do you reconcile this with Jesus' ministering to the foreigner?

6. **Luke 10: 25-37.** Later, while on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus told the story of the good Samaritan. We will study it more carefully in a later chapter. Read it now quickly, trying to imagine the shock to the racial and religious prejudices of the Jews that a hated Samaritan should be set forth as an example of genuine liberality, while their own religious leaders, the priests and the Levites, were condemned. From this incident, how far do you feel Jesus was bound by the religious prejudices of his people?

7. Glance over the week's reading, keeping in mind the racial and religious prejudices of the Jews. What was Jesus' attitude? How far was he bound by Jewish narrowness?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Between what races and nationalities is there racial or national prejudice? What are the causes of this feeling?

2. In what ways do we show racial or national prejudice in our town and in our nation? What is race prejudice? Why does one race or nationality assume that it is superior to another?

3. What racial and religious prejudices bound the Jews? What were the causes of this bitter feeling?

4. What was Jesus' attitude toward the narrowness of his people?

a. Mark 7: 24-37 (Sections 1 and 2). Where did Jesus go on this journey? Why? What was the significance of his listening to the appeal of this Greek woman?

b. Luke 4: 24-27 (Section 4). What light do these examples, given by Jesus, throw on his attitude toward the foreigner? Why were his fellow townspeople "filled with rage"?

c. Luke 10: 25-37 (Section 6). In this story how did Jesus shock the prejudices of the Jews?

d. Matt. 10: 5-7 (Section 5). How do you reconcile Jesus' instructions here with his attitude as revealed in the other incidents?

e. How did Jesus deal with the racial and national prejudices of his people?

5. To what extent is our prejudice against other races and nations justified; to what extent is it based on the kind of false pride with which Jesus broke in his day? Has any race a right to assume that it is superior to another? Why or why not?

6. Why does a Christian believe in the possibilities of other peoples? How do Christians show this belief? How far has the missionary's confidence in the possibilities of backward peoples been justified?

7. What races and nationalities make good citizens of our country? What races and nationalities make poor citizens? Do foreigners help or hinder the country? Why? what restrictions, if any, would you place upon the admission of foreigners into this country?

8. To what extent are certain races and nations backward

because they have poor natural qualifications; to what extent are they backward because they have had less opportunity? What races, if any, are unworthy to be considered equal to the whites?

9. What are the causes of race riots? How far do they result from causes that are real; how much from prejudiced newspapers and other propaganda?

10. How do we show our disrespect for other nations? Specifically, what harm, if any, is there in a Christian man referring to other nationalities by disrespectful nicknames?

11. What are some of the things immediately necessary if other races and nationalities in our own country and backward nations in the world are to be guaranteed a fair opportunity?

Summary of Events

We have covered thus far in the life of Jesus the following major sections:

1. Jesus, on the Jordan, answers John's challenge and in the wilderness struggle decides his life mission (Chapters I and II).

2. Jesus, healing and teaching in Galilee, wins the approval of the people, and in repeated clashes with the religious leaders makes clear his moral and religious standards (Chapters III to IX).

3. Jesus is forced by the growing hostility of the religious leaders to leave Galilee, and visits Tyre, Sidon, and Decapolis (Chapter X).

It will be seen that up to this time most of the events we have studied occurred in Capernaum and in the immediate vicinity of the Sea of Galilee, a section no larger than an average county in the United States. This was, however, a densely populated region.

CHAPTER XI

How Much Does Loyalty Cost?

Jesus Faces His Followers with Costly Sacrifice

Every cause has followers as long as things are going well. Fair-weather followers we call them. When the odds go against an enterprise and genuine difficulties arise, then real loyalty is tested.

In the incidents recorded in this chapter, Jesus faces his followers with just such a test. The opposition of the Scribes and Pharisees had grown more severe. Jesus, practically a fugitive, had made the quick tour of Tyre and Sidon and through the Decapolis (see Chapter X, page 46). Jesus sees what is ahead if he is to remain true to his decision in the wilderness crisis and persist in the course which he has been following. Seemingly the disciples have not yet sensed the danger and suffering ahead, and believe, despite the increasing hostility of the religious leaders, that in some way Jesus will establish the earthly kingdom for which they had been looking. Look for evidences of this in the readings in this chapter. We have here a crisis or turning point in Jesus' life. He goes with his disciples a day's journey north to Caesarea Philippi, at the base of Mt. Hermon and near the source of the Jordan. There he faces with them the suffering and death ahead and appeals for loyalty in the face of costly sacrifice. Let us see how much loyalty costs.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Mark 8: 27—9: 50.

- 27 Then Jesus and his disciples set off for the villages of
Caesarea Philippi; and on the road he inquired of his dis-
28 ciples, "Who do people say I am?" "John the Baptist,"
they told him, "though some say Elijah and others say you
29 are one of the prophets." So he inquired of them, "And
who do you say I am?" Peter replied, "You are the
30 Christ." Then he forbade them to tell anyone about him.
31 And he proceeded to teach them that the Son of man had
to endure great suffering, to be rejected by the elders and
the high priests and the scribes, to be killed and after

- 32 three days to rise again; he spoke of this quite freely.
33 Peter took him and began to reprove him for it, but he
turned on him and noticing his disciples reproved Peter,
telling him, "Get behind me, you Satan! Your outlook is
34 not God's but man's." Then he called the crowd to him
with his disciples and said to them, "If anyone wishes to
follow me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and so
follow me;
35 for whoever wants to save his life will lose it,
and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's
will save it.
36 What profit is it for a man to gain the whole world and
37 to forfeit his soul? What could a man offer as an equivalent for his soul?
38 Whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this disloyal
and sinful generation, the Son of man will be ashamed of
him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy
1 angels. I tell you truly," he said to them, "there are
some of those standing here who will not taste death till
they see the coming of God's Reign with power."
2 Six days afterwards Jesus took Peter, James and John,
and led them up a high hill by themselves alone; in their
3 presence he was transfigured and his clothes glistened
white, vivid white, such as no fuller on earth could bleach
4 them. And Elijah along with Moses appeared to them, and
5 conversed with Jesus. So Peter addressed Jesus, saying,
"Rabbi, it is a good thing we are here; let us put up three
6 tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah" (for
7 he did not know what to say, they were so terrified). Then
a cloud came overshadowing them, and from the cloud a
voice said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, listen to him."
8 And suddenly looking round they saw no one there except
9 Jesus all alone beside them. As they went down the hill,
he forbade them to tell anyone what they had seen, till
10 such time as the Son of man rose from the dead. This
order they obeyed, debating with themselves what 'rising'
11 from the dead' meant. So they put this question to him,
"Why do the [Pharisees and] scribes say that Elijah has to
12 come first?" He said to them, "Elijah does come first, to
restore all things; but what is written about the Son of
man as well? This, that he is to endure great suffering
13 and be rejected. As for Elijah, I tell you he has come
already, and they have done to him whatever they pleased
14—as it is written of him." When they reached the dis-
ciples they saw a large crowd round them, and some-
15 scribes arguing with them. On seeing him the whole
16 crowd was thunderstruck and ran to greet him. Jesus

- 17 asked them, "What are you discussing with them?" A
 man from the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I brought
 18 my son to you; he has a dumb spirit, and whenever it
 seizes him it throws him down, and he foams at the
 mouth and grinds his teeth. He is wasting away with it;
 so I told your disciples to cast it out, but they could not."
 19 He answered them, "O faithless generation, how long must
 I still be with you? how long have I to bear with you?
 20 Bring him to me." So they brought the boy to him, and
 when the spirit saw Jesus it at once convulsed the boy;
 he fell on the ground and rolled about foaming at the
 1 mouth. Jesus asked his father, "How long has he been
 22 like this?" "From childhood," he said; "it has thrown
 him into fire and water many a time, to destroy him. If
 you can do anything, do help us, do have pity on us."
 23 Jesus said to him, "If you can! Anything can be done
 24 for one who believes." At once the father of the boy cried
 25 out, "I do believe; help my unbelief." Now as Jesus saw
 that a crowd was rapidly gathering, he checked the un-
 clean spirit. "Deaf and dumb spirit," he said, "leave him,
 26 I command you, and never enter him again." And it did
 come out, after shrieking aloud and convulsing him vio-
 lently. The child turned like a corpse, so that most people
 27 said, "He is dead"; but, taking his hand, Jesus raised him
 28 and he got up. When he went indoors his disciples asked
 29 him in private, "Why could we not cast it out?" He said
 to them, "Nothing can make this kind come out but prayer
 and fasting."
 30 On leaving there they passed through Galilee. He did
 31 not want anyone to know of their journey, for he was
 teaching his disciples, telling them that the Son of man
 would be betrayed into the hands of men, that they would
 kill him, and that when he was killed he would rise again
 32 after three days. But they did not understand what he
 said, and they were afraid to ask him what he meant.
 33 Then they reached Capharnaum. And when he was in-
 doors he asked them, "What were you arguing about on
 34 the road?" They said nothing, for on the road they had been
 35 disputing about which of them was the greatest. So he
 sat down and called the twelve. "If anyone wants to be
 first," he said to them, "he must be last of all and the ser-
 36 vant of all." Then he took a little child, set it among them,
 and putting his arms round it said to them,
 37 "Whoever receives one of these little ones in my name
 receives me,
 and whoever receives me receives not me but him who
 sent me."

- 38 John said to him, "Teacher, we saw a man casting out
 39 daemons in your name; but he does not follow us, and
 40 so we stopped him." Jesus said, "Do not stop him; no one
 41 who performs any miracle in my name will be ready to
 42 speak evil of me. He who is not against us is for us.
 43 Whoever gives you a cup of water because you belong to
 Christ, I tell you truly, he shall not miss his reward.
 44 And whoever is a hindrance to one of these little ones
 who believe, it were better for him to have a great mill-
 stone hung round his neck and be thrown into the sea.
 45 If your hand is a hindrance to you, cut it off:
 better be maimed and get into Life,
 than keep your two hands and go to Gehenna, to the
 fire that is never quenched.
 46 If your foot is a hindrance to you, cut it off:
 better get into Life a cripple,
 than keep your two feet and be thrown into Gehenna.
 47 If your eye is a hindrance to you, tear it out:
 better get into God's Realm with one eye,
 than keep your two eyes and be thrown into Gehenna,
 48 where *their worm never dies and the fire is never
 put out.*
 49 Everyone has to be consecrated by the fire of the dis-
 cipline.
 50 Salt is excellent:
 but if salt is tasteless, how are you to restore its
 flavour?
 Let there be 'salt between you';
 be at peace with one another."

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Mark 8: 27-33.** In reading this incident, remember what we found in Study I (see page 4) about the Jewish hope that the Christ or Messiah would start a great kingdom such as King David had. What does Jesus here say will happen to this Messiah? Why should this prediction of a disgraceful death bring such a shock? Read verse 33. How did the issue here facing Jesus compare with that in the wilderness crisis? (See Chapter II.)

2. **Mark 8: 34-9: 1.** This multitude was made up of Jews, looking for a real deliverer who would get rid of the Roman power and set up this new Jewish kingdom. What do you think of Jesus' offer of suffering and sacrifice to this crowd as an appeal for followers?

3. Reread **Mark 8: 27-9: 1**, noticing especially the summary Jesus makes of his appeal (verse 35). This statement sounds

like a contradiction. What does Jesus mean? How far do you find this is true today—in business for instance?

4. **Mark 9: 2-13.** Remember the prediction Jesus had just made of what he and his followers would have to suffer. What help would an experience like this give for the suffering ahead? What is the relation of a genuine religious experience, say in a prayer meeting or revival service, to the everyday difficulties of life?

5. **Mark 9: 14-29.** Notice that Jesus and his disciples came up against the real needs of life just as soon as they got back into the valley. Why is it so hard to keep the joy and enthusiasm of a religious meeting when confronted by the everyday difficulties of life?

6. **Mark 9: 30-35.** Just after Jesus had again told them of the suffering and death ahead, the disciples have an argument as to who will get the biggest place in this kingdom. Why was it difficult for Jesus' disciples to understand what he said about the cost of following him?

7. **Mark 9: 36-50.** Notice especially verses 42-47. Do you believe a Christian life is worth that much of a cost? Why or why not?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. When persons are asked to enlist as followers of Jesus, or to join the Church or some organization of the Church, what inducements are offered them to lead them to do this?

2. What did Jesus offer the crowds if they would follow him? **Mark 8: 34-38** (Section 2). Would you or would you not call Jesus' offer an inducement? Why?

3. What benefits did the disciples and the crowds think they would receive when the Messiah came? What was the common idea in Jesus' day concerning the Messiah and the Kingdom of God?

4. What did Jesus predict would happen to the Christ or Messiah? **Mark 8: 27-33** (Section 1). Judging by the reply of Peter, **Mark 8: 33**, how did the disciples receive this news?

5. What did Jesus mean by "deny yourself," "take up your cross," "lose your life"? In terms of present-day life, how would you state Jesus' appeal to the disciples and the crowds?

6. In asking young men or women to become Christians today or to join the Church, which will bring the greater response: a statement of the benefits of the Christian life, or Jesus' appeal of a chance for costly sacrificial service? Why?

7. Which brings the greater response for enlistment in the army or navy: the appeal of peace time, good pay, educational opportunities, and a chance to see the world; or the appeal during the Great War, danger, suffering, death, but a chance to help defeat the Kaiser? Why?

8. Name some things requiring sacrifice and hard service which you could offer a person today to induce him to enlist in Jesus' cause.

9. Why does it cost so little to be a Christian today? Suppose a Christian started out really to live by Jesus' standards in business, industrial, and political life, and to help change conditions which are wrong, how much hard service and sacrifice would be necessary?

10. Why are Christians so apathetic in the face of the un-Christian conditions in the world? Is martyrdom necessary today if the Kingdom is to be brought in? Why or why not?

11. Why are men willing to make the supreme sacrifice for the cause of country and not for the cause of Christ?

Who is the slacker in Jesus' cause?

Summary of Events

We come now to the fifth major section of Jesus' life, the incidents on the journey to Jerusalem. Most of these are recorded in Luke only and are arranged with very little reference to the chronological order. Just as some person, after going on a trip with a noted man from San Francisco to Washington, might write down without much reference to when or where they occurred, the interesting incidents on the trip, so here we have a series of reminiscences of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. Evidently the same kind of questions came up repeatedly on the journey, for in different places in the record the same type of material occurs. This is but natural. A man on a political tour today, for instance, would face the same type of questions in different places along his route.

In the study of this material, therefore, it is rearranged logically under the major questions and issues which Jesus faces on his way to Jerusalem. This covers Chapter XII to XVIII.

The major sections of the life of Jesus thus far are the following:

1. Jesus, beside the Jordan, answers John's challenge and in the wilderness struggle decides his life mission (Chapters I and II).
2. Jesus, healing and teaching in Galilee, wins the approval of the people, and in repeated clashes with the religious leaders he makes clear his moral and religious standards (Chapters III to IX).
3. Jesus is forced by the growing hostility of the religious leaders to leave Galilee, and he visits Tyre, Sidon, and Decapolis (Chapter X).
4. Jesus at Caesarea Philippi faces with his disciples the cost of Messiahship and starts for Jerusalem (Chapter XI).
5. Jesus continues his work and teaching on the journey to Jerusalem (Chapters XII to XVIII).

CHAPTER XII

What Good Does It Do to Pray?

Jesus Answers Inquiries about Prayer

Already we have had hints of the reality and power of Jesus' praying. The disciples were so impressed that they asked Jesus to share with them the secret and to teach them how to pray.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Luke 10: 1-24.

1 After that the Lord commissioned other seventy disciples, sending them in front of him two by two to every
2 town and place that he intended to visit himself. He said to them, "The harvest is rich, but the labourers are few; so pray the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to
3 gather his harvest. Go your way; I am sending you out
4 like lambs among wolves. Carry no purse, no wallet, no
5 sandals. Do not stop to salute anybody on the road. What-
ever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this household!'
6 Then, if there is a soul there breathing peace, your peace will rest on him; otherwise it will come back to you.
7 Stay at the same house, eating and drinking what the people provide (for the workman deserves his wages); you
8 are not to shift from one house to another. Wherever you are received on entering any town, eat what is provided for
9 you, heal those in the town who are ill, and tell them, 'The
10 Reign of God is nearly on you.' But wherever you are not received on entering any town, go out into the streets of
11 the town and cry, 'The very dust of your town that clings to us we wipe off from our feet as a protest. But mark this,
12 the Reign of God is near!' I tell you, on the great Day it will be more bearable for Sodom than for that town. Woe
13 to you, Khorazin! woe to you, Bethsaida! Had the miracles performed in you been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have been sitting penitent in sack-
14 cloth and ashes. But it will be more bearable for Tyre and

- 15 Sidon at the judgment than for you. And you, O Capharna-
hum! *Exalted to heaven? No, you will sink to Hades!*
- 16 He who listens to you listens to me,
 he who rejects you rejects me,
 and he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."
- 17 The seventy came back with joy. "Lord," they said, "the
18 very daemons obey us in your name" He said to them,
"Yes, I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of
19 lightning. I have indeed given you the power of *treading*
 on serpents and scorpions and of trampling down all the
20 power of the Enemy, nothing shall injure you. Only,
 do not rejoice because the spirits obey you:
 rejoice because your names are enrolled in heaven."
- 21 He thrilled with joy at that hour in the holy Spirit, say-
ing, "I praise thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for
concealing this from the wise and learned and revealing
it to the simple-minded; yes, Father, I praise thee that
such was thy chosen purpose." Then turning to the dis-
ciples he said,
- 22 "All has been handed over to me by my Father:
 and no one knows who the Son is except the Father,
 or who the Father is except the Son,
 and he to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."
- Then turning to the disciples he said privately,
- 23 "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see!
- 24 For I tell you many prophets and kings have desired to
 see what you see,
 but they have not seen it;
 and to hear what you hear,
 but they have not heard it."

Luke 11: 1-13.

- 1 He was praying at a certain place, and when he stopped
one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray,
2 as John taught his disciples" He said to them,
 "When you pray, say, Father,
 thy name be revered,
 thy Reign begin;
3 give us our bread for the morrow day by day,
4 and forgive us our sins
 for we do forgive everyone who has offended us;
 and lead us not into temptation."
- 5 And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and
you go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, let me
6 have three loaves; for a friend of mine travelling has come
7 to my house and I have nothing to set before him.' And
suppose he answers from the inside, 'Don't bother me; the

- door is locked by this time, and my children are in bed
8 with me. I can't get up and give you anything.' I tell you,
though he will not get up and give you anything because
you are a friend of his, he will at least rise and give you
9 whatever you want, because you persist. So I tell you,
ask and the gift will be yours,
seek and you will find,
knock and the door will open to you;
10 for everyone who asks receives,
the seeker finds,
the door is opened to anyone who knocks.
11 What father among you, if asked by his son for a loaf,
will hand him a stone?
Or, if asked for a fish, will hand him a serpent instead
of a fish?
12 Or, if asked for an egg, will he hand him a scorpion?
13 Well, if for all your evil you know to give your children
what is good,
how much more will your Father give the holy Spirit
from heaven to those who ask him?"

Luke 18: 1-14.

- 1 He also told them a parable about the need of always
2 praying and never losing heart. "In a certain town," he
said, "there was a judge who had no reverence for God
3 and no respect even for man. And in that town there was
a widow who used to go and appeal to him for 'Justice
4 against my opponent!' For a while he would not, but after-
wards he said to himself, 'Though I have no reverence for
5 God and no respect even for man, still, as this widow is
bothering me, I will see justice done to her—not to have
6 her for ever coming and pestering me.' Listen," said the
7 Lord, "to what this unjust judge says! And will not God
see justice done to his elect who cry to him by day and
8 night? Will he be tolerant to their opponents? I tell you,
he will quickly see justice done to his elect! And yet, when
the Son of man does come, will he find faith on earth?"
9 He also told the following parable to certain persons who
were sure of their own goodness and looked down upon
10 everybody else. "Two men went up to pray in the temple;
11 one was a Pharisee and the other was a taxgatherer. The
Pharisee stood up and prayed by himself as follows: 'I
thank thee, O God, I am not like the rest of men, thieves,
12 rogues, and immoral, or even like yon taxgatherer. Twice
13 a week I fast; on all my income I pay tithes.' But the tax-
gatherer stood far away and would not lift even his eyes to
heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'O God, have mercy on

14 me for my sins!' I tell you, he went home accepted by God rather than the other man;
for everyone who uplifts himself will be humbled,
and he who humbles himself will be uplifted."

Mark 1: 35-39. See page 11.

Mark 6: 45-47.

45 Then he made the disciples at once embark in the boat and cross before him towards Bethsaida, while he dismissed
46 the crowd; and after saying goodbye to them he went up
47 the hill to pray.

Luke 6: 12, 13.

12 It was in these days that he went off to the hillside to
13 pray. He spent the whole night in prayer to God, and when day broke he summoned his disciples, choosing twelve of them, to whom he gave the name of 'apostles':

Luke 9: 18, 28, 29.

18 Now it happened that while he was praying by himself his disciples were beside him . . .
28 It was about eight days after he said this, when he took Peter, John, and James, and went up the hillside to pray.
29 While he was praying the appearance of his face altered and his dress turned dazzling white.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Luke 10: 1-16.** How did the disciples help answer the prayer for laborers?

2. **Luke 10: 17-24.** To what did the disciples ascribe their success? How much does God really help a man on a great mission?

3. **Luke 11: 1-4.** (Compare Matt. 6: 5-15) What are the points of emphasis in the Lord's Prayer? What light does it throw on how to pray?

4. **Luke 11: 5-13.** Must God be begged? If all that is necessary is to ask, why beg God?

5. **Luke 18: 1-8.** How willing is God to answer prayer?

6. **Luke 18: 9-14.** Why was the tax-gatherer's prayer answered rather than the religious Pharisee's?

7. Let us glance back over the records of Jesus' life as we have read them thus far and see when Jesus slipped away from the crowds for prayer. Read **Mark 1: 35-39, 6: 45-47.** Notice the place of prayer, according to Luke's record, in several other events already studied. Read **Luke 6: 12, 13; 9: 18, 28, 29.**

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What is prayer? Why do people pray?
2. When Jesus' disciples asked him how to pray, what reply did he make? Luke 11: 1-4 (Section 3). What are the main elements in the Lord's Prayer? What does it show as to how to pray? What did Jesus mean by prayer?
3. Under what circumstances did Jesus withdraw for quiet and prayer (Section 7)? What is the relation of prayer to one's ability to do well his part in the world?
4. What point does Jesus make about persistence in prayer? Luke 11: 5-13; Luke 18: 1-8 (Sections 4 and 5). Must God be begged? If God knows our needs, why ask him at all?
5. Why was the tax-gatherer's prayer answered rather than the Pharisee's? Luke 18: 9-14 (Section 6). When are prayers answered?
6. How are prayers answered? What part had the disciples in answering the prayer for laborers, Luke 10: 1-24 (Sections 1 and 2)? What part has a person in answering his own prayers?
7. To what did the disciples ascribe their success? Luke 10: 17-24 (Section 2). How much does God really help a man who has a mission in the world? How?
8. What can prayer accomplish apart from the person who prays?¹
9. What help, if any, can a man expect in other than strictly "spiritual" matters?
10. In what terms shall we think of God so that he is real to people when they pray?
11. How necessary are regular times for prayer? How can a person learn to pray?

¹ Rephrasing of title of pamphlet on prayer by Professor E. I. Bosworth.

CHAPTER XIII

What Is Our Responsibility in the World?

Jesus Extends the Obligations of His Followers

Two major problems face us in the world relations: What obligation does any single nation owe to the rest of the world? How can the various peoples live together in peace and cooperation in the new world?

We have already found that Jesus refused to be bound by the narrow racial and religious prejudices of his people. What responsibility would he have a Christian and a Christian nation assume in the world?

BIBLE REFERENCES

Luke 10: 25-37.

- 25 Now a jurist got up to tempt him. "Teacher," he said,
26 "what am I to do to inherit life eternal?" He said to him,
"What is written in the law? What do you read there?"
27 He replied, "*You must love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul, with your whole strength, and with your whole mind. Also your neighbour*
28 *as yourself.*" "A right answer!" said Jesus; "*do that and*
29 *you will live.*" Anxious to make an excuse for himself, however, he said to Jesus, "But who is my neighbour?"
30 Jesus rejoined, "A man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among robbers who stripped and belaboured
31 him and then went off leaving him half-dead. Now it so chanced that a priest was going down the same road,
32 but on seeing him he went past on the opposite side. So did a Levite who came to the spot; he looked at him but
33 passed on the opposite side. However a Samaritan traveller came to where he was and felt pity when he saw him;
34 he went to him, bound his wounds up, pouring oil and wine into them, mounted him on his own steed, took
35 him to an inn, and attended to him. Next morning he took out a couple of shillings and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Attend to him, and if you are put to any extra

36 expense I will refund you on my way back' Which of these
 three men, in your opinion, proved a neighbour to the man
 37 who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The man who took
 pity on him." Jesus said to him, "Then go and do the
 same."

Luke 11: 29-32.

29 As the crowds were thronging to him, he proceeded to
 say,
 "This is an evil generation: it demands a Sign,
 but no Sign will be given to it except the Sign of
 Jonah;
 30 for as Jonah was a Sign to the Ninivites,
 so shall the Son of man be to this generation.
 31 The queen of the South will rise at the judgment with
 the men of this generation and condemn them;
 for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to
 the wisdom of Solomon,
 and here is One greater than Solomon.
 32 The men of Nineve will rise at the judgment with this
 generation and condemn it;
 for when Jonah preached they did repent,
 and here is One greater than Jonah."

Luke 13: 22-30.

22 On he went, teaching from one town and village to an-
 23 other, as he made his way to Jerusalem. A man said to
 him, "Is it only a few, sir, who are saved?" So he said
 24 to them, "Strive to get in through the narrow door, for I tell
 25 you many will try to get in and not be able, once the
 master of the House has got up and closed the door. You
 may stand outside and knock at the door, crying, 'Lord,
 open for us,' but he will answer you, 'I do not know where
 26 you come from.' You will then proceed to say, 'But we ate
 and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets!'
 27 'I tell you,' he will say, 'I do not know where you come
 28 from; *begone every one of you, you evildoers.*' There you
 will wail and gnash your teeth, to see Abraham, Isaac,
 Jacob and all the prophets inside the Realm of God and
 29 yourselves thrown out. Yes, and people will come *from*
east and west and north and south to their places at the
 feast within the Realm of God.
 30 Some are last who will be first,
 and some are first who will be last."

Mark 7: 24-29.

24 Leaving there, he went away to the territory of Tyre and
 Sidon. He went into a house and wished no one to know

25 of it, but he could not escape notice; a woman heard of
him, whose daughter had an unclean spirit, and she came
26 in and fell at his feet (the woman was a pagan, of Syro-
phoenician birth) begging him to cast the daemon out of
27 her daughter. He said to her, "Let the children be satis-
fied first of all; it is not fair to take the children's bread
28 and throw it to the dogs." She answered him, "No, sir,
but under the table the dogs do pick up the children's
29 crumbs." He said to her, "Well, go your way; the daemon
has left your daughter, since you have said that."

Luke 4: 16-30.

16 Then he came to Nazaret, where he had been brought up,
and on the sabbath he entered the synagogue as was his
17 custom. He stood up to read the lesson and was handed
the book of the prophet Isaiah; on opening the book he came
upon the place where it was written,

18 *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me:*
for he has consecrated me to preach the gospel to the
poor,
he has sent me to proclaim release for captives
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set free the oppressed,

19 *to proclaim the Lord's year of favour.*

20 Then, folding up the book, he handed it back to the at-
tendant and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue
21 were fixed on him, and he proceeded to tell them that
22 "To-day, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." All
spoke well of him and marvelled at the gracious words
that came from his lips; they said, "Is this not Joseph's
23 son?" So he said to them, "No doubt you will repeat to
me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' 'Do here in your
own country all we have heard you did in Capharnahum.'"
24 He added, "I tell you truly, no prophet is ever welcome
25 in his own native place. I tell you for a fact,

In Israel there were many widows during the days of
Elijah,

when the sky was closed for three years and six
months,

when a great famine came over all the land:

26 yet Elijah was not sent to any of these,
but only to a widow woman at Zarephath in Sidon.

27 And in Israel there were many lepers in the time of the
prophet Elisha,

yet none of these was cleansed,
but only Naaman the Syrian."

28 When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled

29 with rage; they rose up, put him out of the town, and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, in order to hurl him down. But he made his way through them and went off.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Luke 10: 25-37.** A Jew felt no responsibility to a man of another race or religion. How did Jesus change this narrow Jewish notion in this story?

2. Read **Luke 10: 27-37.** What is it to be neighborly according to Jesus? What kind of neighborliness is our nation showing in the world?

3. **Luke 11: 29-32.** Notice Jesus' strong condemnation of the religious narrowness of the Jews of his day.

4. **Luke 13: 22-30.** The Jews thought they had a corner of the Kingdom of God. What does Jesus mean by saying that those from the East and West, from the North and South, should sit down in the Kingdom first?

5. **Mark 7: 24-30.** We found in a previous chapter (page 46), that Jesus ministered to the need of a foreign woman. Would you or would you not consider this as evidence that he felt obligated to others than Jews?

6. **Luke 4: 16-30.** Here is evidence from Jewish history against Jewish narrowness.

7. Think over these incidents in the record of Jesus' life as we have studied it thus far. Judging by the whole spirit and attitude of his life, as well as by these specific incidents, how much obligation do you think he felt to others than Jews?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Name countries in which we have become interested as the result of the War; nationalities and races for whom we have come to have greater respect. Compare our sense of responsibility to the rest of the world, before the War, during the War, and since the War.

2. What are the significant places in the world today?

a. What are the greatest tension and friction points? What are the outstanding causes of this tension?

b. In which countries or continents is the question of democracy being decided? What is the issue in each?

c. In the world situation, how do Asia, Africa, and South America compare in importance with North America and Europe? What proportion of the world's territory, population, and undeveloped resources are found in Asia, Africa, and South America?

d. What nations are the most significant? Which hold the key to the world situation?

3. What responsibility should our country take in this world situation? What arguments do honest people give in favor of her confining her obligations to this continent?

4. Jesus lived among a people who felt no obligation except for those who were Jews. Why did the Jews feel they had no obligation to those of another race or religion?

5. Consider the story of the good Samaritan, Luke 10: 25-37 (Section 1 and 2) to discover:

a. In what ways Jesus outraged this strictly national viewpoint.

b. How he widened the range of a Jew's obligation. According to Jesus, who is a neighbor?

c. What was the difference between the neighborliness of the Levite and the priest, and that of the Samaritan? What is it to be neighborly?

6. What calls for neighborliness are being made upon us as a nation, and as individuals?

a. What nations have need of us at this time? What kind of help do they need?

b. What disastrous results, if any, are likely to come if our nation fails to take her responsibility?

c. What, if anything, can we contribute to the world at the present time, better than any other nation?

7. Just what part do you think our country should take in the present world situation?

a. Can she isolate herself?

b. Should she hold herself aloof from the diplomatic manipulations of international relations, or should she take her full part even at the risk of compromise?

c. Should she depend upon moral persuasion or would she be justified in using force?

8. What is our country doing through her missionary movements to help the world? In its effectiveness in meeting the present situation, how does the missionary program compare with government action?

9. What are the chief hindrances to neighborliness between nations? Why have militarism, treaties, and alliances failed to eliminate them? What are the possibilities of a League of Nations, as a method of organizing the world into a neighborhood?

CHAPTER XIV

How Can We Face Life Without Worry?

Jesus Sets Forth the Christian's Confidence in God

With the turbulent days which Jesus saw ahead, it was but natural that he should share with his disciples the basis of his confidence. Worry about what will happen in business and home is ever present today. In times of stress, the days ahead look especially ominous. How does the Christian differ from the non-Christian in his ability to face anxiety?

BIBLE REFERENCES

Luke 12: 1-12, 22-59.

- 1 Meanwhile as the crowd was gathering in its thousands till they trod on one another, he proceeded to say to his disciples first of all, "Be on your guard against the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy
- 2 Nothing is hidden that shall not be revealed, or concealed that shall not be made known.
- 3 So all you utter in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you whisper in chambers will be proclaimed on the housetops.
- 4 I tell you, my friends, have no fear of those who kill the body but after that can do no more;
- 5 I will show you whom to fear—
fear Him who after he has killed has power to cast you into Gehenna.
- Yes, I tell you, fear Him.
- 6 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings?
Yet not one of them is forgotten by God.
- 7 But the very hairs on your head are all numbered;
fear not, you are worth far more than sparrows.
- 8 I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men,
the Son of man will acknowledge him before the angels of God;
- 9 and he who disowns me before men
will be disowned before the angels of God.

- 10 Everyone also who says a word against the Son of man
will be forgiven for it,
but he who blasphemes against the holy Spirit will never
be forgiven.
- 11 When they bring you before synagogues and the magis-
trates and authorities, do not trouble yourselves about how
12 to defend yourselves or what to say, for the holy Spirit
will teach you at that hour what you should say." . . .
- 22 To his disciples he said,
"Therefore I tell you,
do not trouble about what you are to eat in life,
nor about what you are to put on your body,
23 life is something more than food,
and the body is something more than clothes.
- 24 Look at the crows! they neither sow nor reap,
no storehouse or granary have they,
and yet God feeds them.
How much more are you worth than birds?
- 25 Which of you can add an ell to his height by troubling
about it?
- 26 and if you cannot manage even this, why trouble over
other things?
- 27 Look how the lilies neither spin nor weave;
and yet, I tell you, even Solomon in all his grandeur
was never robed like one of them.
- 28 Now if God so clothes grass which blooms to-day in the
field and is thrown to-morrow into the furnace, will he not
much more clothe you? O men, how little you trust him!
- 29 So do not seek food and drink and be worried; pagans
30 make food and drink their aim in life, but your Father
31 knows quite well you need that; only seek his Realm, and
32 it will be yours over and above. Fear not, you little flock,
for your Father is delighted to give you the Realm.
- 33 Sell what you possess and give it away in alms,
make purses for yourselves that never wear out:
get treasure in heaven that never fails,
that no thief can get at, no moth destroy.
- 34 For where your treasure lies,
your heart will lie there too.
- 35 Keep your loins girt and your lamps lit, and be like men
36 who are expecting their lord and master on his return
from a marriage-banquet, so as to open the door for him
37 at once when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those
servants whom the lord and master finds awake when he
comes! I tell you truly, he will gird himself, make them
recline at table, and come forward to wait on them.
- 38 Whether he comes in the second or the third watch of the

- 39 night and finds them thus alert, blessed are they! Be sure
that if the householder had known at what hour the thief
was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be
40 broken into. So be ready yourselves, for the Son of man
41 is coming at an hour you do not expect" Peter said, "Lord,
are you telling this parable for us, or is it for all
42 and sundry?" The Lord said, "Well, where is the trusty,
thoughtful steward whom the lord and master will set
over his establishment to give out supplies at the proper
43 time? Blessed is that servant if his lord and master finds
44 him so doing when he arrives! I tell you plainly, he will
45 set him over all his property. But if that servant says to
himself, 'My lord and master is long of arriving,' and if
he starts to beat the menservants and maidservants, to eat
46 and drink and get drunk, that servant's lord and master
will arrive on a day when he does not expect him and at
an hour which he does not know; he will cut him in two and
assign him the fate of unbelievers.
- 47 The servant who knew his lord and master's orders and
did not prepare for them,
will receive many lashes;
48 whereas he who was ignorant and did what deserves .
beating,
will receive few lashes.
He who has much given him
will have much required from him,
and he who has much entrusted to him
will have all the more demanded of him.
- 49 I have come to throw fire on earth.
Would it were kindled already!
- 50 I have a baptism to undergo.
How I am distressed till it is all over!
- 51 You think I am here to make peace on earth?
No, I tell you, it is dissension.
- 52 After this there will be five at issue in one house,
three divided against two and two against three,
53 father against son and *son against father*,
mother against daughter and *daughter against mother*,
mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and *daughter-in-law*
against mother-in-law."
- 54 And to the crowds he said,
"When you see a cloud rise in the west,
you say, 'There is a shower coming,'
and so it is:
- 55 when you feel the south wind blow,
you say, 'There will be heat,'
and so it is.

- 56 You hypocrites, you know how to decipher the look of earth and sky;
how is it you cannot decipher the meaning of this era?
57 And why do you not yourselves settle what is right?
58 Thus, when you go before the magistrate with your opponent, do your utmost to get quit of him, on the way there, in case he hales you before the judge; then the judge will hand you over to the jailer and the jailer will throw you in prison. I tell you, you will never get out till you pay the last farthing of your debt."

Luke 13: 31-33.

- 31 Just then some Pharisees came up to tell him, "Get away
32 from here, for Herod intends to kill you." "Go and tell that fox," he replied, "I cast out daemons and perform cures to-day and to-morrow, and on the third day I complete my task! But I must journey on, to-day, to-morrow, and the next day; it would never do for a prophet to perish except in Jerusalem!"

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. Luke 12: 1-5. Why did Jesus feel that his disciples should not fear physical death?
2. Luke 12: 6-12. Does your experience bear witness that God cares?
3. Luke 12: 22-34. How can a man "be not anxious" about food and clothing in the modern world?
4. Luke 12: 35-46. How do you reconcile this recommendation to be "on the job" with the previous command not to trouble about food and clothing?
5. Luke 12: 47, 48. What do you think about the justice of this?
6. Luke 12: 49-59. What about Jesus' cause divides people so sharply?
7. Luke 13: 31-33. Why did Jesus refuse to heed this warning of death ahead? What makes a man able to look death in the face?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What makes folks worry?
2. Can a Christian face tomorrow with less worry than a non-Christian? Why or why not?
3. Why did Jesus feel his disciples should not fear the days ahead? Luke 12: 1-12 (Sections 1 and 2). Does your experience bear witness to God's care? If so, where and how?

4. Luke 12: 22-34 (Section 3). What is meant by "Do not trouble"? What is the difference, if any, between worry and legitimate foresight? Some folks say: "The Christian religion is merely a drug to make one endure bad conditions and to take no thought about getting ahead, through the hope of future bliss.". What do you think about it?

5. Can a man who "seeks the Realm" count on all these other things "over and above"? (Verse 31.) Some people believe that there is a Providence that rules over individuals and nations and that a Christian can trust God for the days ahead. What is your experience?

6. To what extent have great national leaders had faith in God's providence? How about Washington, Lincoln, Gladstone?

7. What was the secret of Jesus' confidence? Just what is it about a Christian's trust in God which makes him face tomorrow with confidence?

CHAPTER XV

What Is a Man's Object in His Work?

Jesus Establishes an Impelling Motive for Life

For most men the object of their job or profession is to "make a living" or to "make money." Can a man follow the ideal of Jesus and have the making of money or a living as his object? Why should a man work at his job or profession?

BIBLE REFERENCES

Luke 12: 13-34.

- 13 A man out of the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my
14 brother to give me my share of our inheritance"; but he
said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over
15 your affairs?" Then he said to them, "See and keep clear
of covetousness in every shape and form, for a man's life
is not part of his possessions because he has ample wealth."
16 And he told them a parable. "A rich man's estate bore
17 heavy crops. So he debated, 'What am I to do? I have
18 no room to store my crops.' And he said, 'This is what
I will do. I will pull down my granaries and build larger
19 ones, where I can store all my produce and my goods. And
I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample stores laid up
for many a year; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.'"
20 But God said to him, 'Foolish man, this very night your
soul is wanted; and who will get all you have prepared?'
21 So fares the man who lays up treasure for himself instead
22 of gaining the riches of God." To his disciples he said,
"Therefore I tell you,
do not trouble about what you are to eat in life,
nor about what you are to put on your body;
23 life is something more than food,
and the body is something more than clothes.
24 Look at the crows! they neither sow nor reap,
no storehouse or granary have they,
and yet God feeds them.
How much more are you worth than birds?
25 Which of you can add an ell to his height by troubling
about it?

- 26 and if you cannot manage even this, why trouble over other things?
- 27 Look how the lilies neither spin nor weave;
and yet, I tell you, even Solomon in all his grandeur was never robed like one of them.
- 28 Now if God so clothes grass which blooms to-day in the field and is thrown to-morrow into the furnace, will he not much more clothe you? O men, how little you trust him!
- 29 So do not seek food and drink and be worried; pagans
- 30 make food and drink their aim in life, but your Father
- 31 knows quite well you need that; only seek his Realm, and
- 32 it will be yours over and above. Fear not, you little flock, for your Father is delighted to give you the Realm.
- 33 Sell what you possess and give it away in alms,
make purses for yourselves that never wear out;
get treasure in heaven that never fails,
that no thief can get at, no moth destroy.
- 34 For where your treasure lies,
your heart will lie there, too."

Luke 18: 18-30.

- 18 Then a ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what am I to do
- 19 to inherit life eternal?" Jesus said to him, "Why call me
- 20 'good'? No one is good, no one but God. You know the commands: *do not commit adultery, do not kill, do not steal, do not bear false witness, honour your father and mother.*"
- 21 He said, "I have observed all these commands from my
- 22 youth" When Jesus heard this he said to him, "You lack one thing more; sell all you have, distribute the money among the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then
- 23 come and follow me." But when he heard that, he was
- 24 vexed, for he was extremely rich. So Jesus looked at him and said, "How difficult it is for those who have money
- 25 to enter the Realm of God! Why, it is easier for a camel to get through a needle's eye than for a rich man to get
- 26 into the Realm of God." His hearers said, "Then whoever
- 27 can be saved?" He said, "What is impossible for men is
- 28 possible for God." Peter said, "Well, we have left our
- 29 homes and followed you!" He said to them, "I tell you truly, no one has left home or wife or brothers or parents
- 30 or children for the sake of the Realm of God, who does not receive ever so much more in this present world, and in the world to come life eternal."

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Luke 12: 13-21.** Notice the question from the crowd which caused Jesus to tell this story (Verse 13). Would people

in your community have objected to this man's building a bigger barn? What was it in the way he handled his affairs which made Jesus call this man a "foolish" farmer?

2. Reread **Luke 12: 13-21**, noticing especially Jesus' statement, "See and keep clear of covetousness in every shape and form, for a man's life is not part of his possessions because he has ample wealth." Give some modern examples of covetousness. Of what then does life consist? If this man had been a good church member and given liberally to philanthropy, would it have been all right for him to have built this bigger barn?

3. **Luke 12: 22-34**. "So do not seek food and drink and be worried; pagans make food and drink their aim in life." How, if at all, do a man's aim in his life and his work differ? What is wrong in making food and clothing the object?

4. **Luke 12: 22-34**. Jesus says, "Seek first the Realm, and all these things will be yours over and above." How would you explain to a man in your town what Jesus meant here? How can a man, say a farmer or a plumber, "seek first the Kingdom"?

5. **Luke 18: 18-23**. Notice this young man's question to Jesus. If he had asked you, "What more must I do to live the Christ-like life?" what would you have told him? Why did Jesus insist that he give away his money? What place, do you think Jesus felt money should have in a man's object in life?

6. **Luke 18: 24-30**. What do you think of this statement? How many of the men you know make "trust in riches" the basis of their work?

7. Glance over the week's readings. How would you answer the following questions: Can a man have the making of money or a living as his object in his job or profession and be true to Jesus' ideal? In present-day language, what would you say Jesus asks a man to have as the object of his life? Would or would not this apply to his work? Why?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. As you think of clerks, office and factory employes, manufacturers and merchants, business men, lawyers, and others, why do these men work at their job or business or profession?

2. For what percentage is the making of money or a living the major object; for what percentage is service the major object?

3. Can a man have the making of a living or money as his major object and be a Christian according to Jesus' ideal?

4. Let us see what ideal was Jesus' as he put it up to people in his day:

a. **Luke 12: 13-21** (Sections 1 and 2). What point of issue

led Jesus to tell this story? Would they in your community have objected to this man's building a bigger barn? What was it in his object which made Jesus call him a "foolish" farmer?

b. Luke 12: 22-34 (Sections 3 and 4). Notice especially verses 22, 29-32. Could you follow this suggestion in your community? If so, how? If not, why not? What does Jesus mean by "seeking first the Realm"? If a business or professional man—for instance, a manufacturer, a lawyer, or a carpenter—said to you, "I'd like to try this in my work," how would you suggest to him to go at it to "seek the Realm" in and through his work?

5. From these incidents what place would you say that Jesus felt the making of a living or the making of money should hold in a man's object in life? Would this apply also to a man's life work?

6. If a person were to give his money liberally to the Church and other good causes, might he then have the making of money as his object? Why or why not?

7. When choosing between two positions offered him, what consideration should a man give to salary or income in making his decision?

8. What reasons other than money incentives might lead a man to work at his job or profession? Could we count on these motives being strong enough to keep men at their work? Would they be sufficient incentives for men of independent income?

9. How, if at all, should the reason a minister works at his profession differ from that of a business man or a lawyer? What reasons would Jesus give a man for working at his job or profession?

10. If a manufacturer or the manager of a store asked you how he could make the Kingdom of God the object of his business, what would you tell him? Can a plumber, a painter, a carpenter, a farmer, or an industrial employe seek the Kingdom of God through his work? If so, how? If not, why not?

CHAPTER XVI

What Shall We Do on Sunday?

Jesus Justifies His Breaking of the Sabbath Law

The criticism of Jesus, because he refused to obey the Sabbath customs and laws, continued. Much of our ordinary observance of Sunday is following custom which has gradually grown up. Let us see if we can get from Jesus' attitude on the Sabbath any ideals or standards for Sunday observance.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Luke 13: 10-17.

10 When he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the
11 sabbath, there was a woman who for eighteen years had
suffered weakness from an evil spirit; indeed she was bent
12 double and quite unable to raise herself. Jesus noticed her
and called to her, "Woman, you are released from your
13 weakness." He laid his hands on her, and instantly she
14 became erect and glorified God. But the president of the
synagogue was annoyed at Jesus healing on the sabbath,
and he said to the crowd, "There are six days for work to
be done; come during them to get healed, instead of on
15 the sabbath." The Lord replied to him, "You hypocrites,
does not each of you untether his ox or ass from the stall
16 on the sabbath and lead it away to drink? And this
woman, a daughter of Abraham, bound by Satan for all
these eighteen years, was she not to be freed from her
17 bondage on the sabbath?" As he said this, all his opponents
were put to shame, but all the crowd rejoiced over all his
splendid doings.

Luke 14: 1-6.

1 Now when he entered the house of a ruler who be-
longed to the Pharisees to take a meal, they watched
2 him closely. In front of him there was a man who
3 had dropsy; so Jesus asked the jurists and Pharisees, "Is
4 it right to heal on the sabbath or not?" They held their
peace. Then Jesus took hold of the man and cured him
5 and sent him off. "Which of you," he said to them, "when

an ass or an ox has fallen into a well, will not pull him out at once upon the sabbath day?" This they could not dispute.

Mark 1: 21-34. See page 11.

Mark 2: 23-28. See page 15.

Mark 3: 1-6. See page 16.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Luke 13: 10-17.** The ruler of the synagogue wanted Jesus to respect the Sabbath custom and to ask the woman to give her name and address and see what he could do on a week day. If you were a minister and a man openly broke a recognized Sabbath custom right in the church as did Jesus on this occasion, would you be angry? Would your anger be justified?

2. **Luke 13: 10-17.** Would it not have been better if Jesus had respected the Sabbath custom and asked the woman to come back on some other day? What was Jesus' defense of his breaking of the Sabbath?

3. **Luke 14: 1-6.** Compare this incident with the one recorded on the first day. State Jesus' standard for the Sabbath so far as you find it in these two incidents.

4. Read again the account of a typical Sabbath day as given in **Mark 1: 21-34** (see Chapter III, Sections 3-5). How did Jesus spend his Sabbath? How do we spend Sunday?

5. Read again **Mark 2: 23-28** (see Chapter IV, Section 4). No great physical need is found here. Why did Jesus defend his disciples for breaking the Sabbath? If a man asked you what Jesus meant by saying, "the sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath," what would you tell him?

6. Read again **Mark 3: 1-6** (see Chapter IV, Section 5). If to do good is the standard for deciding what is lawful on Sunday, how does Sunday differ from other days?

7. Glance again over these incidents. What would you say was Jesus' standard for deciding what to do and what not to do on the Sabbath? What, if any, difference in our present Sunday standards would the adoption of this ideal of Jesus make necessary?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What things, if any, which you do on week days, do you feel it is wrong to do on Sunday? Why? What things, if any, which you do on Sunday, do you not do on week days? Why?

2. How do you decide what to do and what not to do on Sunday?

3. Let us see what Jesus' attitude was toward the Sabbath in his day.

a. When did Jesus' disciples break the Sabbath? What was Jesus' defense of them? Mark 2: 23-28 (Section 5).

b. Under what circumstances did Jesus break the Sabbath law of his day? What was his defense? Luke 13: 10-17; Luke 14: 1-6; Mark 3: 1-6 (Sections 1, 2, 3, and 6).

c. What is recorded in the typical Sabbath day as spent by Jesus? Mark 1: 21-34 (Section 4).

4. Judging by these incidents, on what principles would you say Jesus decided what to do and what not to do on the Sabbath?

5. What was the essential difference between the standard of the Pharisees as to the Sabbath and the standard of Jesus? According to Jesus, what is the purpose of the Sabbath?

6. If this is Jesus' idea about the Sabbath, where would you draw the line between Sunday and other days?

7. Why has society by law forbidden the continuance of regular work on Sunday? Why in some localities have laws been passed forbidding Sunday baseball, movies, etc.? What do you think about such laws?

8. In what ways was Sunday observance in an American camp or in a training center in France different from its observance in a normal community? Why?

9. How does the observance differ in a large complex city center and in a small village? In an industrial community with a sixty-hour week and in a farming community? Why?

10. In a "good" Sunday, what proportionate place should the following have: physical rest and recreation, spiritual strengthening, visiting with home folks and friends, and doing good to others? How much work and how much recreation would you justify?

11. What is the reason for Sunday school, public worship, and other religious services on Sunday? How many should a person attend?

12. Give the principal happenings in what you would call an ideal Sunday.

CHAPTER XVII

What Determines the Value of a Man?

Jesus Shows His Estimate of People

There is much discussion at present in regard to the basis upon which men and women should be paid in business and industrial life. "As little as they can be secured for," some say. Then labor organizes to secure as much as possible. Others say, "What they earn." Still others hold that they should be paid in proportion to their living costs, so that each will have enough income to make life wholesome and that this shall be guaranteed to every person willing to work.

As Christians we are interested in the basis on which Jesus determined the value of people.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Luke 15: 1-32.

- 1 Now the taxgatherers and sinners were all approach-
2 ing him to listen to him, but the Pharisees and the
3 scribes complained, "He welcomes sinners and eats along
4 with them!" So he told them this parable, "Which of
5 you with a hundred sheep, if he loses one, does not leave
6 the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the lost one till
7 he finds it? When he finds it he puts it on his shoulders
8 with joy, and when he gets home he gathers his friends and
9 neighbours. 'Rejoice with me,' he says to them, 'for I have
10 found the sheep I lost.' So, I tell you, there will be joy
11 in heaven over a single sinner who repents, more than
12 over ninety-nine good people who do not need to repent. Or
again, suppose a woman has ten shillings. If she loses one
of them, does she not light a lamp and scour the house
and search carefully till she finds it? And when she finds
it she gathers her women-friends and neighbours, saying,
'Rejoice with me, for I have found the shilling I lost.' So,
I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God
over a single sinner who repents."
- 11 He also said: "There was a man who had two sons,
12 and the younger said to his father, 'Father, give me the
share of the property that falls to me.' So he divided his

13 means among them. Not many days later, the younger son
 14 sold off everything and went abroad to a distant land,
 15 where he squandered his means in loose living. After he
 16 had spent his all, a severe famine set in throughout that
 17 land, and he began to feel in want; so he went and attached
 18 himself to a citizen of that land, who sent him to his fields
 19 to feed swine. And he was fain to fill his belly with the
 20 pods the swine were eating; no one gave him anything.
 21 But when he came to his senses he said, 'How many hired
 22 men of my father have more than enough to eat, and
 23 here am I perishing of hunger! I will be up and off to my
 24 father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned
 25 against heaven and before you; I don't deserve to be called
 26 your son any more; only make me like one of your hired
 27 men."' So he got up and went off to his father. But
 28 when he was still far away his father saw him and felt
 29 pity for him and ran to fall upon his neck and kiss him.
 30 The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven
 31 and before you; I don't deserve to be called your son any
 32 more.' But the father said to his servants, 'Quick, bring
 33 the best robe and put it on him, give him a ring for his
 34 hand and sandals for his feet, and bring the fatted calf,
 35 kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for my son here was
 36 dead and he has come to life, he was lost and he is found.'
 37 So they began to make merry. Now his elder son was out
 38 in the field, and as he came near the house he heard music
 39 and dancing; so, summoning one of the servants, he asked
 40 what this meant. The servant told him, 'Your brother
 41 has arrived, and your father has killed the fatted calf
 42 because he has got him back safe and sound.' This angered
 43 him, and he would not go in. His father came out and
 44 tried to appease him, but he replied, 'Look at all the years
 45 I have been serving you! I have never neglected any of
 46 your orders, and yet you have never given me so much
 47 as a kid, to let me make merry with my friends. But as
 48 soon as this son of yours arrives, after having wasted your
 49 means with harlots, you kill the fatted calf for him!' The
 50 father said to him, 'My son, you and I are always together,
 51 all I have is yours. We could not but make merry and
 52 rejoice, for your brother here was dead and has come to
 53 life again, he was lost but he has been found.'"

Luke 16: 19-31.

19 "There was a rich man, clad in purple and fine linen, who
 20 lived sumptuously every day. Outside his door lay a poor
 21 man called Lazarus; he was a mass of ulcers, and fain to
 22 eat up the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. (The

22 very dogs used to come and lick his ulcers.) Now it happened that the poor man died, and he was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man died too, and was
 23 buried. And as he was being tortured in Hades he raised his eyes and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus in his
 24 bosom; so he called out, 'Father Abraham, take pity on me, send Lazarus to dip his fingertip in water and cool my tongue,
 25 for I am in anguish in these flames.' But Abraham said, 'Remember, my son, you got all the bliss when you were
 26 alive, just as Lazarus got the ills of life; he is in comfort now and you are in anguish. Besides all that, a great gulf
 27 yawns between us and you, to keep back those who want to cross from us to you and also those who want to pass
 28 from you to us.' Then he said, 'Well, father, I beg you to send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers; let
 29 him bear testimony to them that they may not come to this place of torture as well.' 'They have got Moses and the
 30 prophets,' said Abraham, 'they can listen to them.' 'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone only goes to them
 31 from the dead, they will repent.' He said to him, 'If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be convinced, not even if one rose from the dead.'

Luke 17: 1-6, 11-19.

1 To his disciples he said, "It is inevitable that hindrances should come, but woe to the man by whom they come;
 2 it would be well for him to have a millstone hung round his neck and be flung into the sea, rather than prove
 3 a hindrance to one of these little ones! Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins, check him, and if he
 4 repents forgive him. Even if he sins against you seven times in one day and turns to you seven times saying, 'I
 5 repent,' you must forgive him." The apostles said to the Lord, "Give us more faith!" The Lord said, "If you had
 6 faith the size of a grain of mustard-seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."
 11 Now it happened in the course of his journey to Jerusalem that he passed between Samaria and Galilee. On
 12 entering one village he was met by ten lepers who stood at a distance and lifted up their voice, saying, "Jesus, master,
 13 have pity on us." Noticing them he said, "Go and *show yourselves to the priests.*" And as they went away they
 14 were cleansed. Now one of them turned back when he saw he was cured, glorifying God with a loud voice; and he fell
 15 on his face at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. The man
 16 was a Samaritan. So Jesus said, "Were all the ten not

18 cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was there no one to
 19 return and give glory to God except this foreigner?" And
 he said to him, "Get up and go, your faith has made you
 well."

Matt. 20: 1-16.

1 "For the Realm of heaven is like a householder who
 2 went out early in the morning to hire labourers for
 his vineyard, and after agreeing with the labourers to pay
 them a shilling a day he sent them into his vineyard.
 3 Then, on going out at nine o'clock he noticed some other
 4 labourers standing in the marketplace doing nothing; to
 them he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and I will give
 5 you whatever wage is fair.' So they went in. Going out
 again at twelve o'clock and at three o'clock, he did the
 6 same thing. And when he went out at five o'clock he came
 upon some others who were standing; he said to them,
 7 'Why have you stood doing nothing all the day?' 'Because
 nobody hired us,' they said. He told them, 'You go into
 8 the vineyard too.' Now when evening came the master
 of the vineyard said to his bailiff, 'Summon the labourers
 and pay them their wages, beginning with the last and
 9 going on to the first.' When those who had been hired
 10 about five o'clock came, they got a shilling each. So when
 the first labourers came up, they supposed they would
 11 get more; but they too got each their shilling. And on
 12 getting it they grumbled at the householder. 'These last,'
 they said, 'have only worked a single hour, and yet you
 have ranked them equal to us who have borne the brunt
 13 of the day's work and the heat!' Then he replied to one
 of them, 'My man, I am not wronging you. Did you not
 14 agree with me for a shilling? Take what belongs to you
 and be off. I choose to give this last man the same as you.
 15 Can I not do as I please with what belongs to me? Have
 16 you a grudge because I am generous?' So shall the last
 be first and the first last."

Matt. 25: 31-46.

31 "When the Son of man comes in his glory and *all the*
 32 *angels with him*, then he will sit on the throne of his glory,
 and all nations will be gathered in front of him; he will
 separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates
 33 the sheep from the goats, setting the sheep on his right
 34 hand and the goats on his left. Then shall the King say
 to those on his right, 'Come, you whom my Father has
 blessed, come into your inheritance in the realm prepared
 for you from the foundation of the world.'

- 35 For I was hungry and you fed me,
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
I was a stranger and you entertained me,
36 I was unclothed and you clothed me,
I was ill and you looked after me,
I was in prison and you visited me.'
- 37 Then the just will answer,
'Lord, when did we see you hungry and fed you? or
thirsty and gave you drink?
38 when did we see you a stranger and entertain you? or
unclothed and clothed you?
39 when did we see you ill or in prison and visit you?'
40 The King will answer them, 'I tell you truly, in so far as
you did it to one of these brothers of mine, even to the least
41 of them, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those on
the left, 'Begone from me, you accursed ones, to the eternal
fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels!
- 42 For I was hungry but you never fed me,
I was thirsty but you never gave me drink,
43 I was a stranger but you never entertained me,
I was unclothed but you never clothed me,
I was ill and in prison but you never looked after me.'
- 44 Then they will answer too, 'Lord, when did we ever see
you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or unclothed or ill or
45 in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will an-
swer them, 'I tell you truly, in so far as you did not do it
to one of these, even the least of them, you did not do it to
me.'
- 46 So they shall depart to eternal punishment,
and the just to eternal life."

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Luke 15: 1-10.** Notice that Jesus told these three stories about the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son in answer to criticism of him for associating with outcaste people (See verse 1.) Why should there be more rejoicing over a man who came back, than over ninety and nine righteous persons? Do we really believe that "a man may be down, but he is never out"?

2. **Luke 15: 11-32.** On what basis did the father decide the worth of his two boys? What do you think of the complaint of the older brother? Judging from these three stories, on what basis would you say Jesus determined his estimate of people?

3. **Luke 16: 19-31.** What was it in the rich man's attitude toward the beggar which made him unfit for heaven?

4. **Luke 17: 1-6.** It is claimed that a great proportion of

criminals have been caused to go wrong and could have been saved if the "causes of stumbling" had been removed. What do you think of Jesus' condemnation of the persons who cause others to go wrong? Would this apply to employers who pay less than a living wage and make it hard for girls to live decent and pure lives?

5. **Luke 17: 11-19.** This is but one of many incidents where Jesus responded to the appeal of the sick and needy. What does this show as to his estimate of the value of people?

6. **Matt. 20: 1-16.** Notice the substitution of *human need* for *utilitarian value* in the pay of laborers. Compare the basis on which a foreman determines the value of a workman in the shop. Some people say society should be placed on the basis indicated in this parable: a living income guaranteed to every one willing to work. What do you think?

7. **Matt. 25: 31-46.** What hint does this incident give as to the comparative value of people?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. How does the foreman or superintendent of a factory or the manager of a department store determine the value of an employe? On what basis are men and women valued in modern industrial and business concerns?

2. How far does this basis of estimating the worth of a person hold good in other parts of modern life? What, if any, other factors enter in?

3. According to the ordinary standard of modern life, what determines the value of a person?

4. Let us see what Jesus' basis was for estimating the value of people:

a. What made him tell the stories of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son? **Luke 15: 1-32** (Sections 1 and 2). What point does Jesus make in these stories as to his feeling toward outcasts and disreputable people? On what basis did he decide their value?

b. How much attention did Jesus give to the sick and the needy? What does this show as to his basis for deciding the value of people?

c. In Jesus' story of the laborers in the vineyard, **Matt. 20: 1-16** (Section 7), on what basis were the laborers paid? Why did those who worked the longer time object? Was their objection well grounded?

5. Judging by these incidents, what would you say was Jesus' basis for deciding the value of people?

6. To what extent are men and women in industrial and business concerns paid on their ability to produce returns for the concern; to what extent on Jesus' basis?

7. List the evidences in modern life that folks are considered supremely valuable. List the evidences that they are valued on the same basis as machinery.

8. Is the tendency of modern life toward a lower or a higher valuation of the individual? What makes you think so?

9. Some folks say that the basis given in the parable of the laborers, either work or a living wage guaranteed to every person willing to work, should be the basis of modern life. What do you think?

10. What changes are necessary in industrial and business concerns if men and women are to be valued on Jesus' basis? Could a business concern be made to pay on this basis?

CHAPTER XVIII

What Makes a Person a Success?

Jesus Shows His Basis for True Leadership

Despite Jesus' repeated statement, the disciples persisted in their confident belief that when he reached the capital he would start a new kingdom, and they were interested in who would have the prominent positions in that kingdom. The question came up several times on the way to Jerusalem. Let us read these incidents, together with some other material which throws light on Jesus' idea of who should have the places of responsibility and leadership.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Mark 9: 33-50. See page 55.

Mark 10: 32-45.

- 32 They were on the way up to Jerusalem, Jesus walking in front of them: the disciples were in dismay and the company who followed were afraid. So once again he took the twelve aside and proceeded to tell them what was
- 33 going to happen to himself. "We are going up to Jerusalem," he said, "and the Son of man will be betrayed to the high priests and scribes; they will sentence him to
- 34 death and hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him, spit on him, scourge him, and kill him; then after three days he will rise again."
- 35 James and John, the sons of Zebedaeus, came up to him saying, "Teacher, we want you to do whatever we ask
- 36 you." So he said, "What do you want me to do for you?"
- 37 They said to him, "Give us seats, one at your right hand
- 38 and one at your left hand, in your glory." Jesus said, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup I have to drink, or undergo the baptism I have to under-
- 39 go?" They said to him, "We can." Jesus said, "You shall drink the cup I have to drink and undergo the baptism
- 40 I have to undergo; but it is not for me to grant seats at my right or my left hand—these belong to the men for
- 41 whom they have been destined." Now when the ten heard

- 42 of this, they burst into anger at James and John; so Jesus called them and said,
 "You know the so-called rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them,
 and their great men overbear them:
 43 not so with you.
 Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant,
 44 and whoever of you wants to be first must be your slave;
 45 for the Son of man himself has not come to be served but to serve,
 and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Luke 14: 7-11.

- 7 He also told a parable to the guests, when he observed how they picked out the best places. "When anyone invites you to a marriage-banquet," he said, "never lie down in the best place, in case a more distinguished guest than yourself has been invited; then the host will tell you, 'Make room for him,' and you will proceed in shame to
 10 take the lowest place. No, when you are invited, go and recline in the lowest place, so that when your host comes in he will tell you, 'Move higher up, my friend.' Then you will be honoured before your fellow guests.
 11 For everyone who uplifts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be uplifted."

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. Read again Mark 9: 33-50. This is the first record of the discussion among the disciples about the best places in the new kingdom. Remember this came just after Jesus had told them what his followers must suffer. Why did they misunderstand him? Who does Jesus here say will be great?
2. Mark 10: 32-34. Notice the fear of the disciples. Jesus again tells them what will happen in Jerusalem.
3. Mark 10: 35-40. Evidently, James and John still did not understand. They came around and tried to get Jesus to promise them the two best jobs—Secretary of State and Secretary of the Treasury perhaps—in his new kingdom. What harm, if any, was there in James and John trying to get an "inside pull" on these two best positions?
4. Mark 10: 40-45. What is Jesus' idea of the way to obtain high rank? How true is this to modern life—to the granting of political positions, in your town for example?
5. On one occasion during his journey to Jerusalem, Jesus attended a banquet and he noticed those invited scrambling to

get the best places. Then he told a story. Read it, **Luke 14: 7-11**. Why should a man not seek the best place? What is the difference between seeking a place and seeking to be worthy of it?

6. What do you think of Jesus' statement in **Luke 14: 11**? How true is this to modern life? In a business concern, can a man count on being promoted if he keeps quiet and works on the job?

7. Glance over the week's readings and write in a sentence what you consider Jesus' idea of who would be a success. How is this like and how different from the current idea of what makes a person get ahead in business and political life?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Who are the leading men in your town? Why do you call them the most prominent? What makes a man considered prominent and successful in your town?

2. When this question came up in Jesus' group, how did he meet it?

a. Why were the disciples worried as to who should have the best places?

b. **Mark 10: 35-45** (Sections 3 and 4). On what basis did James and John expect to get these best places? What harm, if any, was there in this attempt to get an "inside pull"? What was Jesus' idea of who should have the most responsible posts?

c. **Luke 14: 7-11** (Sections 5 and 6). Why did Jesus object to the guests' scrambling for the best places? In your observation does Jesus' idea in verse 11 work out in modern life?

3. What would you say was Jesus' idea as to who should get ahead or make a success?

4. To what extent does the average big man in your town measure up to Jesus' idea? Test the men in politics, business, and religious and other work.

5. In what professions and lines of work today must a man be a real servant if he would occupy a place of responsibility; in what can he get by and look out for Number One?

6. To what extent are political positions due to "inside pull"; to what extent are they the reward of public service?

7. In business firms you know, can a man count on being promoted if he keeps quiet and works on the job? What is the basis for your answer?

8. Do you think a chance to serve would satisfy the capable men in your town and bring out their best? Why or why not?

9. Does Jesus in these incidents discourage honest ambitions? For example, how would you suggest to a man in a business concern that he go at it to get a promotion? How far has a man a right to seek a position or promotion? Should a minister seek a position or must he wait for a call? Why?

10. To what extent does being a success mean "bossing the job" and to what extent willingness to work harder and take more responsibility than the rest?

CHAPTER XIX

Who Is a Hypocrite?

Jesus' Indignation Blazes Forth against Graft and Hypocrisy

Any person who has the idea that Jesus was a mild, anemic person should read, with an understanding of the situation, this week's record of the fearless, scathing invective of Jesus. Why are Christians so complacent today in the face of wrong hiding itself behind religion? Who are the hypocrites in modern life?

BIBLE REFERENCES

Mark 11: 1-10, 15-18, 27-33.

- 1 Now when they came near Jerusalem, near Bethphage and Bethany, at the Hill of Olives, he despatched two
- 2 of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village in front of you. As soon as you enter it you will find a colt tethered, on which no one has ever sat; untether it
- 3 and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing that?' say, 'The Lord needs it, and he will send it back
- 4 immediately.'" Off they went and found a colt tethered
- 5 outside a door in the street. They untethered it; but some of the bystanders said to them, "What do you mean by un-
- 6 tethering that colt?" So they answered as Jesus had told
- 7 them, and the men allowed them to go. Then they brought the colt to Jesus, and when they had put their clothes on
- 8 it Jesus seated himself. Many also spread their clothes on the road, while others strewed leaves cut from the
- 9 fields; and both those in front and those who followed shouted,

"Hosanna!

Blessed be he who comes in the Lord's name!

- 10 Blessed be the Reign to come, our father David's reign. *Hosanna in high heaven!"* . . .
- 15 Then they came to Jerusalem, and entering the temple he proceeded to drive out those who were buying and selling inside the temple; he upset the tables of the money-
- 16 changers and the stalls of those who sold doves, and would

not allow anyone to carry a vessel through the temple;
 17 also he taught them. "Is it not written," he asked, "*My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations?*"
 18 You have made it *a den of robbers.*" This came to the ears of the scribes and high priests, and they tried to get him put to death, for they were afraid of him. . . .
 27 Once more they came to Jerusalem. And as he was walking within the temple the high priests and scribes and
 28 elders came and asked him, "What authority have you for acting in this way? Who gave you authority to act
 29 in this way?" Jesus said to them, "I am going to ask you a question. Answer this, and I will tell you what authority I have for acting as I do. What about the baptism
 30 of John? Was it from heaven or from men?" Now they
 32 argued to themselves, "[What are we to say?] If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why did you not believe him?' No, let us say, 'From men'—but they were afraid of the multitude, for the people all held John had been really
 33 a prophet. So they replied to Jesus, "We do not know." Jesus said to them, "No more will I tell you what authority I have for acting as I do."

Mark 12: 1-37.

1 Then he proceeded to address them in parables. "A man *planted a vineyard, fenced it round, dug a trough for the winepress, and built a tower*, then he leased it to
 2 vinedressers and went abroad. When the season came round he sent a servant to the vinedressers to collect from
 3 the vinedressers some of the produce of the vineyard, but they took and flogged him and sent him off with nothing.
 4 Once more he sent them another servant; him they
 5 knocked on the head and insulted. He sent another, but they killed him. And so they treated many others; some
 6 they flogged and some they killed. He had still one left, a beloved son; he sent him to them last, saying, 'They
 7 will respect my son.' But these vinedressers said to themselves, 'Here is the heir; come on, let us kill him, and the
 8 inheritance will be our own.' So they took and killed him, and threw him outside the vineyard. Now what will the
 9 owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vinedressers, and he will give the vineyard to others.
 10 Have you not even read this scripture?—
The stone that the builders rejected is the chief stone now of the corner;
 11 *this is the doing of the Lord,*
and a wonder to our eyes."
 12 Then they tried to get hold of him, but they were afraid

of the multitude. They knew he had meant the parable for them.

- 13 So they left him and went away. But they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to him for the purpose of
 14 catching him with a question. They came up and said to him, "Teacher, we know you are sincere and fearless; you do not court human favour, you teach the Way of God
 15 honestly. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Are we to pay, or are we not to pay?" But he saw their trick and said to them, "Why tempt me? Bring me a shilling.
 16 Let me see it." So they brought one. He said, "Whose likeness, whose inscription is this?" "Caesar's," they said.
 17 Jesus said to them, "Give Caesar what belongs to Caesar, give God what belongs to God." He astonished them.
 18 Sadducees, men who hold there is no resurrection, also
 19 came up and put a question to him. "Teacher," they said, "Moses has written this law for us, that *if a man's brother dies leaving a wife but no child, his brother is to take*
 20 *the woman and raise offspring for his brother.* Now there were seven brothers. The first married a wife and died
 21 leaving no offspring: the second took her and died without
 22 leaving any offspring. so did the third: none of the seven
 23 left any offspring. Last of all the woman died too. At the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? She
 24 was wife to the seven of them." Jesus said to them, "Is this not where you go wrong?—you understand neither the
 25 scriptures nor the power of God. When people rise from the dead they neither marry nor are married, they are
 26 like the angels in heaven. As for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, at the passage on the Bush, how God said to him, *I am the God of Abraham*
 27 *and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob?* He is not the God of dead people but of living. You are far wrong."
 28 Then a scribe came up, who had listened to the discussion. Knowing Jesus had given them an apt answer, he put this question to him, "What is the chief of all the commands?"
 29 Jesus replied, "The chief one is: *Hear, O Israel, the Lord*
 30 *our God is one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul, with your*
 31 *whole mind, and with your whole strength.* The second is this: *You must love your neighbour as yourself.* There is no
 32 other command greater than these." The scribe said to him, "Right, teacher! You have truly said, He is One, and there
 33 is none else but Him. Also, to love him with the whole heart, with the whole understanding, and with the whole strength, and to love one's neighbour as oneself—that is far
 34 more than all holocausts and sacrifices." Jesus noted his in-

telligent answer and said to him, "You are not far off the Realm of God" After that no one ventured to put any more questions to him.

- 35 And as Jesus taught in the temple he asked, "How can
36 the scribes say that the Christ is David's son? David himself said in the holy Spirit,

*The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand,
till I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'*

- 37 David here calls him *Lord*. Then how can he be his son?"
Now the mass of the people listened with delight to him

Matt. 23: 1-33.

- 1 Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples
2 "The scribes and Pharisees sit on the seat of Moses;
3 so do whatever they tell you, obey them, but do not do as
4 they do. They talk but they do not act. They make up
5 heavy loads and lay them on men's shoulders but they will
6 not stir a finger to remove them. Besides, all they do is
7 done to catch the notice of men; they make their phylacteries broad, they wear large tassels, they are fond of the
8 best places at banquets and the front seats in the synagogues; they like to be saluted in the marketplaces and to
9 be called 'rabbi' by men.
10 But you are not to be called 'rabbi,'
11 for One is your teacher, and you are all brothers;
12 you are not to call anyone 'father' on earth.
13 for One is your heavenly Father;
14 nor must you be called 'leaders,'
15 for One is your leader, even the Christ.
16 He who is greatest among you must be your servant.
17 Whoever uplifts himself will be humbled,
18 and whoever humbles himself will be uplifted.
19 Woe to you, you impious scribes and Pharisees!
20 you shut the Realm of heaven in men's faces;
21 you neither enter yourselves,
22 nor will you let those enter who are on the point of
23 entering.
24 Woe to you, you impious scribes and Pharisees!
25 you traverse sea and land to make a single proselyte,
26 and when you succeed you make him a son of Gehenna
27 twice as bad as yourselves.
28 Woe to you, blind guides that you are!
29 you say, 'Swear by the sanctuary, and it means nothing;
30 but swear by the gold of the sanctuary, and the oath
31 is binding.'
32 You are senseless and blind! for which is the greater,
33 the gold or the sanctuary that makes the gold sacred?

- 18 You say again, 'Swear by the altar, and it means nothing;
but swear by the gift upon it, and the oath is binding.'
- 19 You are blind! for which is the greater,
the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?
- 20 He who swears by the altar
swears by it and by all that lies on it;
- 21 he who swears by the sanctuary
swears by it and by Him who inhabits it;
- 22 he who swears by heaven
swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits
upon it.
- 23 Woe to you, you impious scribes and Pharisees!
you tithe the mint and dill and cummin,
and omit the weightier matters of the law,
justice and mercy and faithfulness;
these latter you ought to have practised—without omitting the former.
- 24 Blind guides that you are,
filtering away the gnat and swallowing the camel!
- 25 Woe to you, you irreligious scribes and Pharisees!
you clean the outside of the cup and the plate,
but inside they are filled with your rapacity and
self-indulgence
- 26 Blind Pharisee! first clean the inside of the cup,
so that the outside may be clean as well.
- 27 Woe to you, you irreligious scribes and Pharisees!
you are like tombs white-washed;
they look comely on the outside,
but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all
manner of impurity.
- 28 So to men you seem just,
but inside you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.
- 29 Woe to you, you irreligious scribes and Pharisees! You
build tombs for the prophets and decorate the tombs of the
just, and you say 'If we had been living in the days of our
fathers, we would not have joined them in shedding the
30 blood of the prophets.' So you are witnesses against your-
selves, that you are sons of those who killed the prophets!
- 31 And you will fill up the measure that your fathers filled.
- 32 You serpents! you brood of vipers! how can you escape
being sentenced to Gehenna?"

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Mark 11: 1-10.** Jesus in this public procession chose, from the varied Old Testament prophecies concerning the Mes-

siah, to follow the idea of humility and lowliness (Zech. 9: 9). What was the reason for this?

2. **Mark 11: 15-18.** Here the priests were engaged in a bit of graft, which robbed the people in their most sacred religious practices. Why do you think Jesus used such radical measures? How much courage did it take? What new group lined up against him as the result of his drastic action?

3. **Mark 11: 27-33; 12: 1-12.** The chief priests and scribes are here seeking to get evidence against him. What wrongs in the religious leaders of his day is Jesus attacking?

4. **Mark 12: 13-37.** The Herodians had wanted Jesus to lead a military revolution, and yet here they tried to get evidence against him as a "Red." Note the skill of Jesus' reply. It must have chafed them to admit that their money bore Cæsar's image and that they were a subject people. What was the issue in the question of the Sadducees and in that of the scribe? What was the point of Jesus' reply in each case?

5. **Matt. 23: 1-33.** Read this rapidly. As you read, imagine yourself in the audience in the capital city, Jerusalem, with the leading church members and most respectable people of the capital present. Can you imagine a man having courage to do it in Washington, on the steps of the capitol building, with the leading Congressmen in the crowd?

6. Reread this invective in more detail. **Matt. 23: 1-13**—"for they say and do not." Who are the religious "bluffers"? Why will a man who "bluffs" have his "bluff" called?

7. **Matt. 23: 14-33.** Have you known a person who was very careful about church attendance and Sunday observance, and who gave liberally to good causes, but who was unwilling to give his employes justice?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What was it about the chief priests and the scribes and Pharisees which brought out Jesus' attack? What were the chief points in Jesus' invective? **Mark 11: 15-18, 27-33; Mark 12: 1-37; Matt. 23: 1-33 (Sections 2-7).**

2. If a man today were to attack corresponding groups, against whom would he speak? What would he find wrong?

a. What evidences do you find today of men willing to make graft out of religion? How about the student who attends church for a "stand in," or the business man who joins a church because it will give him standing with some of the leading citizens?

b. Among what groups today have you found people willing to attend church regularly, but unwilling to pay living wages, grant

justice to employes, or help remove race oppression? Who are the Pharisees today?

c. Where would you class a nation that professed great interest in justice and a fair chance for smaller nations, and then grabbed for all it could get in the Peace Conference? What are the Pharisee nations?

3. How much courage did it take for Jesus to attack these chief religious leaders and citizens at the capital city? Why did Jesus use such radical measures against the temple grafters, and against the scribes and Pharisees?

4. How far should we go today in our attack upon wrong? Is the neutrality of the Church on current issues justified?

5. How do men succeed in making the impression of being righteous and just when they are not? If they happen to be leading citizens or have plenty of money, can they "get by"? Why, or why not?

6. Who is the Pharisee or hypocrite today? Why is a hypocrite looked upon with so much contempt? How does hypocrisy in religion differ from hypocrisy in politics or business?

CHAPTER XX

How Can We Meet Times of Supreme Testing?

Jesus Faces Trial and Death

We have lived with Jesus through various experiences of his brief career. Here we have the record of the supreme struggle of his life.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Luke 9: 51-55.

51 As the time for his assumption was now due, he set his
52 face for the journey to Jerusalem. He sent messengers
in front of him. They went and entered a Samaritan vil-
53 lage to make preparations for him, but the people would not
receive him because his face was turned in the direction of
54 Jerusalem. So when the disciples James and John saw
this, they said, "Lord, will you have us bid *fire come down*
55 *from heaven and consume them?*" But he turned and
checked them.

Mark 14: 1-52.

1 The passover and the festival of unleavened bread fell
two days later; so the high priests and scribes were
trying how to get hold of him by craft and have him put
2 to death. "Only," they said, "it must not be during the fes-
tival; that would mean a popular riot"
3 Now when he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the
leper, lying at table, a woman came up with an alabaster
flask of pure nard perfume, which had cost a great sum;
the flask she broke and poured the perfume over his head.
4 This angered some of those present "What was the use
5 of wasting perfume like this? This perfume might have
been sold for over three hundred shillings, and the poor
6 might have got that." So they upbraided her. But Jesus
said, "Let her alone. Why are you annoying her? She has
7 done a beautiful thing to me. The poor you always have be-
side you, and you can be kind to them whenever you want;
8 but you will not always have me. She has done all she

could—she has anticipated the perfuming of my body for burial. I tell you truly, wherever the gospel is preached all over the world, men will speak of what she has done in memory of her.”

10 Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the high
11 priests to betray him to them. They were delighted to hear it, and promised to pay him for it. Meantime he sought a good opportunity for betraying him.

12 On the first day of unleavened bread (the day when the paschal lamb was sacrificed) his disciples said to him, “Where do you want us to go and prepare for you to eat

13 the passover?” So he despatched two of his disciples, telling them, “Go into the city and you will meet a man carrying a water-jar; follow him, and whatever house he goes

14 into, tell the owner that the Teacher says, ‘Where is my room, that I may eat the passover there with my disciples?’

15 He will show you a large room upstairs, with couches spread, all ready; prepare the passover for us there.”

16 The disciples went away into the city and found it was as he had told them. So they prepared the passover, and when

17 evening fell he arrived along with the twelve. As they were at table eating, Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, one of you is going to betray me, one who is eating with me.” They got

18 distressed at this, and said to him one after another, “Surely it is not me?” “Surely it is not me?” “One of the twelve,” he told them, “one who is dipping into the same

19 dish as I am. The Son of man goes the road that the scripture has described for him, but woe to the man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Better that man had

20 never been born!” And as they were eating he took a loaf and after the blessing he broke and gave it to them, saying, “Take this, it means my body.” He also took a cup and

21 after thanking God he gave it to them, and they all drank of it; he said to them, “This means my *covenant-blood* which is shed for many; truly I tell you, I will never drink

22 the produce of the vine again till the day I drink it new within the Realm of God.”

23 After the hymn of praise they went out to the Hill of Olives. Jesus said to them, “You will all be disconcerted, for it is written: *I will strike at the shepherd and the sheep*

24 *will be scattered*. But after my rising I will precede you to Galilee.” Peter said to him, “Though all are disconcerted, I will not be.” Jesus said to him, “I tell you truly, to-day

25 you will disown me three times, this very night, before the cock crows twice.” But he persisted, “Though I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And they all said the same.

32 Then they came to a place called Gethsemane, and he
33 told his disciples, "Sit here till I pray" But he took Peter
and James and John along with him; and as he began to
34 feel appalled and agitated, he said to them, "*My heart is*
35 *sad*, sad even to death; stay here and watch" Then he
went forward a little and fell to the earth, praying that the
36 hour might pass away from him, if possible. "Abba,
Father," he said, "Thou canst do anything. Take this cup
away from me. Yet, not what I will but what thou wilt"
37 Then he came and found them asleep; so he said to Peter,
"Are you sleeping, Simon? Could you not watch for a
38 single hour? Watch and pray, all of you, so that you may
not slip into temptation. The spirit is eager but the flesh
39 is weak." Again he went away and prayed in the same
40 words as before; then he returned and found them once
more asleep, for their eyes were heavy. They did not know
41 what to say to him. Then he came for the third time and
said to them, "Still asleep? still resting? No more of that!
The hour has come, here is the Son of man betrayed into
42 the hands of sinners. Come, get up, here is my betrayer
close at hand."
43 At that very moment, while he was still speaking, Judas
[Iscaiot] one of the twelve came up accompanied by a mob
with swords and clubs who had come from the high priests
44 and scribes and elders. Now his betrayer had given them
a signal; he said, "Whoever I kiss, that is the man. Seize
him and get him safely away." So when he arrived he at once
45 went up to him and said, "Rabbi [rabbi]," and kissed him.
46 Then they laid hands on him and seized him, but one of
47 the bystanders drew his sword and struck the servant of
the high priest, cutting off his ear. Jesus turned on them,
48 saying, "Have you sallied out to arrest me like a robber,
with swords and clubs? Day after day I was beside you in
49 the temple teaching, and you never seized me. However, it
is to let the scriptures be fulfilled."
50 Then they left him and fled, all of them; one young man
51 did follow him, with only a linen sheet thrown round his
52 body, but when the [young] men seized him he fled away
naked, leaving the sheet behind him.

Luke 22: 54-71.

54 Then they arrested him and led him away inside the
house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance and
55 sat down among some people who had lit a fire in the
56 courtyard and were sitting round it. A maidservant who
noticed him sitting by the fire took a long look at him and
57 said, "That fellow was with him, too." But he disowned

58 him, saying, "Woman, I know nothing about him." Shortly afterwards another man noticed him and said, "Why, you are one of them!" "Man," said Peter, "I am not." About an hour had passed when another man insisted, "That fellow really was with him. Why, he is a Galilean!" "Man," said Peter, "I do not know what you mean." Instantly, just as he was speaking, the cock crowed; the Lord turned round and looked at Peter, and then Peter remembered what the Lord had told him, that 'Before cock-crow to-day you will disown me three times.' And he went outside and wept bitterly.

63 Meantime the men who had Jesus in custody flogged him and made fun of him; blindfolding him they would ask him, "Prophesy, tell us who struck you?" And many another insult they uttered against him.

66 When day broke, the elders of the people all met along with the high priests and scribes, and had him brought before their Sanhedrin. They said to him, "Tell us if you are the Christ." He said to them, "You will not believe me if I tell you, and you will not answer me when I put a question to you. But after this *the Son of man will be seated at God's right hand of power.*" "Are you the Son of God then?" they all said. "Certainly," he replied, "I am."

71 So they said, "What more evidence do we need? We have heard it from his own lips."

Luke 23: 1-25.

1 Then the whole body of them rose and led him to 2 Pilate. They proceeded to accuse him, saying, "We have discovered this fellow perverting our nation, forbidding tribute being paid to Cæsar, and alleging he is king messiah." Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He replied, "Certainly." And Pilate said to the high priests and the crowds, "I cannot find anything criminal about him." But they insisted, "He stirs up the people by teaching all over Judaea. He started from Galilee and now he is here." When Pilate heard that, he asked if the man was a Galilean, and ascertaining that he came under the jurisdiction of Herod, he remitted him to Herod, who himself was in Jerusalem during those days. Herod was greatly delighted to see Jesus; he had long wanted to see him, because he had heard about him and also because he hoped to see him perform some miracle. But though he put many questions to him, Jesus gave him no answer.

10 Meanwhile the high priests and scribes stood and accused 11 him with might and main. Then Herod and his troops scoffed at him and made fun of him, and after arraying

- 12 him in a bright robe he remitted him to Pilate. Herod and Pilate, became friends that day—previously they had been at enmity.
- 13 Then summoning the high priests and rulers and the people, Pilate said to them, "You brought me this man as being an inciter to rebellion among the people. I have examined him before you and found nothing criminal about him, for all your accusations against him. No, nor has Herod, for he has remitted him to us. He has done nothing, you see, that calls for death; so I shall release him with a whipping." But they shouted one and all, "Away with him! Release Bar-Abbas for us!"
- 19 (This was a man who had been put into prison on account of a riot which had taken place in the city and also on a charge of murder.) Again Pilate addressed them, for he wanted to release Jesus, but they roared, "To the cross, to the cross with him!" He asked them a third time, "But what crime has he committed? I have found nothing about him that deserves death; so I shall release him with a whipping." But they loudly urged their demand that he should be crucified, and their shouts carried the day.
- 24 Pilate gave sentence that their demand was to be carried out; he released the man they wanted, the man who had been imprisoned for riot and murder, and Jesus he handed over to their will

Mark 15: 16-47.

- 16 The soldiers took him inside the courtyard (that is, the praetorium) and got all the regiment together; then they dressed him in purple, put on his head a crown of thorns which they had plaited, and began to salute him with, "Hail, O king of the Jews!" They struck him on the head with a stick and spat upon him and bent their knees to him in homage. Then, after making fun of him, they stripped off the purple, put on his own clothes, and took him away to crucify him. They forced Simon a Cyrenian who was passing on his way from the country (the father of Alexander and Rufus) to carry his cross, and they led him to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). They offered him wine flavoured with myrrh, but he would not take it. Then they crucified him and *distributed his clothes among themselves, drawing lots for them* to decide each man's share. It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription bearing his charge was:

THE KING OF THE JEWS.

- 27 They also crucified two robbers along with him, one at his

29 right and one at his left. Those who passed by scoffed at him, nodding at him in derision and calling, "Ha! You were to destroy the temple and build it in three days! 30 Come down from the cross and save yourself!" So, too, 31 the high priests made fun of him to themselves with the scribes; "he saved others," they said, "but he cannot save 32 himself! Let 'the Christ,' 'the king of Israel' come down now from the cross! Let us see that and we will believe!" Those who were crucified with him also denounced him.

33 When twelve o'clock came, darkness covered the whole 34 land till three o'clock, and at three o'clock Jesus gave a loud cry, "*Elôî, Elôî, lema sabachthani*" (which means, My 35 God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?) On hearing this some of the bystanders said, "Look, he is calling for 36 Elijah." One man ran off, soaked a sponge in vinegar, and put it on the end of a stick to give him a drink, saying, "Come 37 on, let us see if Elijah does come to take him down!" But 38 Jesus gave a loud cry and expired. And the curtain of 39 the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the army-captain who stood facing him saw that he expired in this way, he said, "This man was certainly a son of God." 40 There were some women also watching at a distance, among them Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James the 41 younger and of Joseph, and Salome, women who had followed him when he was in Galilee and waited on him, besides a number of other women who had accompanied him to Jerusalem.

42 By this time it was evening, and as it was the day of 43 Preparation (that is, the day before the sabbath) Joseph of Arimathaea, a councillor of good position who himself was on the outlook for the Reign of God, ventured to go to 44 Pilate and ask for the body of Jesus. Pilate was surprised that he was dead already; he summoned the captain and 45 asked if he had been dead some time, and on ascertaining this from the captain he bestowed the corpse on Joseph. 46 He, after buying a linen sheet, took him down and swathed him in the linen, laying him in a tomb which had been cut out of the rock and rolling a boulder up against the opening 47 of the tomb. Now Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Joseph noted where he was laid.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Luke 9: 51-55.** Read again the record of Jesus' decision to go up to Jerusalem. How much courage did it take for Jesus deliberately to go up to the capital, the headquarters of those who were plotting his death? Why did he decide to face it out in the capital city?

2. **Mark 14: 1-21.** Why were the chief priests and scribes afraid of a popular uprising if they arrested Jesus publicly? What qualities in Judas made Jesus feel he could not be counted upon when the crisis came? What makes a man a traitor?

3. **Mark 14: 22-31.** Why did the disciples feel sure they would not desert him when danger came?

4. **Mark 14: 32-42.** What was the issue here? Compare it with the one in the wilderness crisis, and at Caesarea Philippi (Chapters II and XI). Remember that Jesus was facing torture on a cross, and the seeming end of his life in disgrace and failure. Why did the religious leaders of his day plot his death? How could he have avoided death even at this time? Why did he refuse to yield?

5. What did Jesus accomplish for his cause by facing it out heroically with his enemies in Jerusalem rather than avoiding a sharp issue? Read **Mark 14: 43-52**, trying to live into this experience.

6. **Luke 22: 54-71; 23: 1-25.** Read the passage rapidly, noting Jesus' poise and bearing. Remember he was being tried in an Oriental country, in an ancient time, on the accusation of men plotting his death, who threatened Pilate into cowardly submission. Why did Jesus make no effort to defend himself or to resist the dastardly treatment of the policemen?

7. **Mark 15: 16-47.** How was Jesus able to bear with such self-control the terrible experiences of his unfair trial and his judicial murder on the cross? What determines how we will act when the supreme crisis comes?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Why does a crisis reveal the real characteristics of a man? What determines how a person will act in a crisis? How much do personal characteristics and how much does training decide?

2. How far can a man prepare himself in advance so that he will meet the testing times effectively? How?

3. What was the issue in Jesus' Gethsemane struggle? **Mark 14: 32-42** (Section 4). How did the issue here compare with that in the crisis in the wilderness and at Caesarea Philippi (Chapters II and XI)? How did this experience prepare Jesus for his trial and crucifixion?

4. Review briefly the experience in connection with Jesus' trial and crucifixion. **Luke 22: 54-71; 23: 1-25; Mark 15: 16-47** (Sections 6 and 7). How was Jesus able to bear with such self-control the terrible experiences of those days? How does confidence in God and prayer help men to meet crises in life?

5. When a man faces a great moral issue, does it really pay to hold steady and not trim, even if it means misunderstanding by your friends and at times martyrdom? How would you demonstrate this to a person who came to you for counsel?

6. What did Jesus gain for his cause by facing it out heroically in Jerusalem? How did Jesus' death help his cause?

7. What qualities in Jesus did the crisis of his trial and death reveal?

CHAPTER, XXI

Can We Believe That Life Does Not End?

Jesus' Followers See That He Is Alive

The great hope of Christianity has centered around a belief that life does not end. Christians, during the centuries, have faced even disaster in their work for Christ's cause in a confidence that life was not in vain and that the cause would triumph. To each person comes the question: Have Christians been clinging to a vain hope? Can we really believe that life does not end and is not lived in vain?

BIBLE REFERENCES

Matt. 27: 62-66.

62 Next day (that is, on the day after the Preparation) the
63 high priests and Pharisees gathered round Pilate and said,
"We remember, sir, that when this impostor was alive he
64 said, 'I will rise after three days.' Now then, give orders
for the tomb to be kept secure till the third day, in case his
disciples go and steal him and then tell the people, 'He
has risen from the dead.' The end of the fraud will then
65 be worse than the beginning of it." Pilate said to them,
"Take a guard of soldiers, go and make it as secure as you
66 can" So off they went and made the tomb secure by putting
a seal on the boulder and setting the guard.

Mark 16: 1-8.

1 And when the sabbath had passed Mary of Magdala,
Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought some
2 spices in order to go and anoint him; and very early on the
first day of the week they went to the tomb, after sunrise.
3 They said to themselves, "Who will roll away the boulder
for us at the opening of the tomb?" (for it was a very large
4 boulder). But when they looked they saw the boulder had
5 been rolled to one side, and on entering the tomb they saw
a youth sitting on the right dressed in a white robe. They
6 were bewildered, but he said to them, "Do not be bewildered.

You are looking for Jesus of Nazaret, who was crucified? He has risen, he is not here. That is the place where he
7 was laid. Go you and tell his disciples and Peter, 'He precedes you to Galilee; you shall see him there, as he told
8 you.' And they fled out of the tomb, for they were seized with terror and beside themselves. They said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid of —¹.

Luke 24: 13-53.

13 That very day two of them were on their way to a village
14 called Emmaus about seven miles from Jerusalem. They
15 were conversing about all these events, and during their conversation and discussion Jesus himself approached and
16 walked beside them, though they were prevented from
17 recognizing him. He said to them, "What is all this you are debating on your walk?" They stopped, looking down-
18 cast, and one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, "Are you a lone stranger in Jerusalem, not to know what has
19 been happening there?" "What is that?" he said to them. They replied, "All about Jesus of Nazaret! To God and
all the people he was a prophet strong in action and utter-
20 ance, but the high priests and our rulers delivered him up
21 to be sentenced to death and crucified him. Our own hope was that he would be the redeemer of Israel; but he is dead,
22 and that is three days ago! Though some women of our number gave us a surprise; they were at the tomb early in
23 the morning and could not find his body, but they came to tell us they had actually seen a vision of angels who de-
24 clared he was alive. Some of our company did go to the tomb and found things exactly as the women had said, but
25 they did not see him." He said to them, "O foolish men, with hearts so slow to believe, after all the prophets have
26 declared! Had not the Christ to suffer thus and so enter his glory?" Then he began with Moses and all the
27 prophets and interpreted to them the passages referring to himself throughout the scriptures. Now they approached
28 the village to which they were going. He pretended to be going further on, but they pressed him, saying, "Stay with us, for it is getting towards evening and the day has now
30 declined." So he went in to stay with them. And as he lay at table with them he took the loaf, blessed it, broke it
31 and handed it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight.
32 And they said to one another, "Did not our hearts glow within us when he was talking to us on the road, opening

¹ The Greek is obscure at this point.

33 up the scriptures for us?" So they got up and returned
that very hour to Jerusalem, where they found the eleven
34 and their friends all gathered, who told them that the Lord
had really risen and that he had appeared to Simon.
35 Then they related their own experience on the road and
how they had recognized him when he broke the loaf.
36 Just as they were speaking He stood among them [and said
37 to them, "Peace to you!"] They were scared and terrified,
38 imagining it was a ghost they saw; but he said to them,
"Why are you upset? Why do doubts invade your mind?"
39 Look at my hands and feet. It is I! Feel me and see; a
40 ghost has not flesh and bones as you see I have." [With
41 these words he showed them his hands and feet.] Even
yet they could not believe it for sheer joy; they were lost
in wonder. So he said to them, "Have you any food here?"
42 And when they handed him a piece of broiled fish, he took
43 and ate it in their presence. Then he said to them, "When
I was still with you, this is what I told you, that whatever
44 is written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets
45 and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their
46 minds to understand the scriptures. "Thus," he said, "it is
written that the Christ has to suffer and rise from the
47 dead on the third day, and that repentance and the remis-
sion of sins must be preached in his name to all nations,
48 beginning from Jerusalem. To this you must bear testi-
49 mony. And I will send down on you what my Father has
promised; wait in the city till you are endued with power
50 from on high." He led them out as far as Bethany; then,
51 lifting his hands, he blessed them. And as he blessed them
52 he parted from them [and was carried up to heaven]. They
[worshipped him and] returned with great joy to Jeru-
53 salem, where they spent all their time within the temple,
blessing God.

Matt. 28: 11-20.

11 While they were on their way, some of the sentries went
into the city and reported all that had taken place to the
12 high priests, who, after meeting and conferring with the
elders, gave a considerable sum of money to the soldiers
13 and told them to say that "his disciples came at night and
14 stole him when we were asleep." "If this comes to the
ears of the governor," they added, "we will satisfy him and
15 see that you have no trouble about the matter." So the
soldiers took the money and followed their instructions;
and this story has been disseminated among the Jews down
to the present day.
16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the hill where

17 Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him
18 they worshipped him, though some were in doubt. Then
Jesus came forward to them and said, "Full authority has
19 been given to me in heaven and on earth; go and make
disciples of all nations, baptize them in the name of the
20 Father and the Son and the holy Spirit, and teach them to
obey all the commands I have laid on you. And I will be
with you all the time, to the very end of the world."

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Matt. 27: 62-66.** What hint does this give as to the fear of the religious leaders of the power of the movement inaugurated by Jesus?

2. **Mark 16: 1-8; Matt. 28: 1-10.** Compare the Mark and Matthew account of Jesus' resurrection.

3. **Luke 24: 13-35.** "Our own hope was that he would be the Redeemer of Israel" (verse 21). What in their idea of the "Deliverer" made it hard for them to keep their hope, when he had suffered such an ignominious death?

4. **Luke 24: 13-35.** Note the strange new light that broke into these men's lives when they could say, "Jesus is living." In what ways is Jesus a living reality to us today?

5. **Luke 24: 36-53.** What difference did it make to the disciples when they believed in Jesus as living?

6. **Matt. 28: 11-20.** In what sense is Jesus the real leader of his cause today?

7. Think back over Jesus' life and the seeming defeat which culminated in his death. What gave him his indomitable confidence that his cause would triumph? How does Jesus' triumph over death give hope to his followers in their efforts to carry on his cause?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Why do we call the heroes whose memory we honor on Memorial Day, immortals? Why do we find it difficult to believe that the fine fellows who "went west" in the War are gone forever?

2. On what grounds do some men disbelieve in immortality? Why can you not give a logical proof of immortality? On what grounds do you believe in something you cannot prove? How can you account for the fact that all races have held this hope, even though there is no logical proof?

3. Review the record of this chapter, **Mark 16: 1-8; Luke 24: 1-53; Matt. 28: 11-20;** (Sections 2 to 7). How is our hope of immortality strengthened by this record of the experience of

Jesus? What advantages has a Christian over others as he faces the experiences of death or the loss of loved ones?

4. How does it help a man to face the world task to believe Jesus is living?

5. When a righteous cause goes to defeat, why does it shake men's confidence in the triumph of right? How, if at all, does a belief in immortality give men courage to work on in the face of discouragement and defeat?

6. What hope does the persistence of Jesus' cause, despite the seeming triumph of his opponents in putting him to death, lend to those who are working in his cause today?

Summary of Events

We have now covered the major part of the record of Jesus' life according to the synoptic gospels. Where an incident appears in more than one gospel, only a single record, either that of Matthew, Mark, or Luke, has been printed. Practically all of the incidents are in chronological order as suggested by Sharman's arrangement in the "Records of the Life of Jesus" and in "Jesus in the Records." Glancing back over this material, it will be seen that sections have been covered as follows:

1. Jesus, beside the Jordan, answers John's challenge and in the wilderness struggle decides his life mission (Chapters I and II).

2. Jesus, healing and teaching in Galilee, wins the approval of the people, and in repeated clashes with the religious leaders he makes clear his moral and religious standards (Chapters III to IX).

3. Jesus is forced by the growing hostility of the religious leaders to leave Galilee, and he visits Tyre, Sidon, and Decapolis (Chapter X).

4. Jesus at Caesarea Philippi faces with his disciples the cost of Messiahship and starts for Jerusalem (Chapter XI).

5. Jesus continues his work and teaching on the journey to Jerusalem (Chapters XII to XVIII).

6. Jesus finally clashes with the religious leaders in Jerusalem (Chapter XIX).

7. Jesus faces the struggle in Gethsemane and meets his trial, crucifixion, and victory (Chapters XX and XXI).

Studies XXII to XXIX deal with issues and questions of importance in the life of today which faced Jesus at various times during his life. The incidents are so scattered that it was difficult to consider them in the chronological study of the record. They are being handled now topically to find just how Jesus met these issues and what he thought about these matters. In these studies there will be found some repetition of material already studied in its setting. It is gathered together in the following chapters under the appropriate topics.

CHAPTER XXII

How Do We Enlist in Jesus' Cause?

What Jesus Asked of His Followers

In this week's readings try to forget your own ideas of what it means to become a follower of Jesus and see what he really asked of those who joined his cause in his day.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Mark 1: 16-20.

16 Now as he passed along the sea of Galilee he saw Simon and Simon's brother Andrew netting fish in the sea—for 17 they were fishermen; so Jesus said to them, "Come, follow 18 me and I will make you fish for men." At once they dropped 19 their nets and went after him. Then going on a little further he saw James the son of Zebedaeus and his brother John; they too were in their boat, mending their nets; 20 he called them at once, and they left their father Zebedaeus in the boat with the crew and went to follow him.

Mark 3: 31-35.

31 Then came his brothers and his mother, and standing outside they sent to call him; there was a crowd sitting round him, and he was told, "Here are your mother and brothers 32 and sisters wanting you outside." He replied, "Who are 33 my mother and my brothers?" And glancing at those who were sitting round him in a circle he said, "There are my 34 mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God, 35 that is my brother and sister and mother."

Mark 8: 34-38.

34 Then he called the crowd to him with his disciples and said to them, "If anyone wishes to follow me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and so follow me; 35 for whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. 36 What profit is it for a man to gain the whole world and

- 37 to forfeit his soul? What could a man offer as an equivalent for his soul?
- 38 Whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this disloyal and sinful generation, the Son of man will be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

Luke 9: 57-62.

- 57 And as they journeyed along the road a man said to him,
 58 "I will follow you anywhere." Jesus said to him,
 "The foxes have their holes,
 the wild birds have their nests,
 but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head."
 59 He said to another man, "Follow me"; but he said, "Let me
 60 go and bury my father first of all." Jesus said to him, "Leave
 the dead to bury their own dead; you go and spread the news
 61 of the Reign of God." Another man also said to him, "I will
 follow you, Lord. But let me first say good-bye to my people
 62 at home." Jesus said to him, "No one is any use to the Reign
 of God who puts his hand to the plough and then looks behind
 him."

Mark 10: 13-22.

- 13 Now people brought children for him to touch them,
 14 and the disciples checked them; but Jesus was angry when
 he saw this, and he said to them, "Let the children come
 to me, do not stop them: the Realm of God belongs to such
 15 as these. I tell you truly, whoever will not submit to the
 reign of God like a child will never get into it at all."
 16 Then he put his arms round them, laid his hands on them
 and blessed them.
- 17 As he went out on the road a man ran up and knelt
 down before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must
 18 I do to inherit life eternal?" Jesus said to him, "Why call
 19 me 'good'? No one is good, no one but God. You know
 the commands: *do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not*
steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, honour
 20 *your father and mother.*" "Teacher," he said, "I have ob-
 21 served all these commands from my youth." Jesus looked
 at him and loved him. "There is one thing you want,"
 he said; "go and sell all you have; give the money to the
 poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, take
 22 up the cross, and follow me." But his face fell at that, and he
 went sadly away, for he had great possessions.

Mark 10: 28-31.

- 28 Peter began, "Well, we have left our all and followed you."

- 29 Jesus said, "I tell you truly, no one has left home or brothers
or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my
30 sake and for the sake of the gospel, who does not get a
hundred times as much—in this present world homes,
brothers, sisters, mothers, children and lands, together
with persecutions, and in the world to come life eternal.
31 Many who are first will be last, and many who are last will
be first."

Luke 14: 25-35.

- 25 There were large crowds travelling with him; so he turned
and said to them,
26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father
and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters,
aye and his own life,
he cannot be a disciple of mine;
27 whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me,
he cannot be a disciple of mine.
28 For which of you wants to build a tower and does not first
sit down to calculate the expense, to see if he has enough
29 money to complete it?—in case, after he has laid the founda-
tion and then is unable to finish the building, all the specta-
30 tors start to make fun of him, saying, 'This fellow started to
31 build but he could not finish it.' Or what king sets out to fight
against another king without first sitting down to deliberate
whether with ten thousand men he can encounter the king
who is attacking him with twenty thousand? If he cannot,
32 when the other is still at a distance he will send an embassy
to do homage to him.
33 So with everyone of you who will not part with all his
goods—
he cannot be a disciple of mine.
34 Salt is excellent indeed: but if salt becomes insipid, what
35 will restore its flavour? It is no use for either soil or
dunghill, it is flung out. He who has an ear let him listen
to this."

Luke 15: 11-32. See page 82.

Luke 19: 1-10. See page 131.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. Mark 1: 16-20; Mark 3: 31-35. What did Jesus' immediate disciples do to become followers of him? Who did Jesus say were genuine relatives of his?

2. Mark 8: 34-38. Just what are the minimum essentials Jesus here lays down for a man "who would come after" him?

If a man today asked you just what he would have to deny himself in becoming a Christian, what would you tell him?

3. **Luke 9: 57-62.** Why did these men refuse to enlist after saying they would? What excuses would men offer to today?

4. **Mark 10: 13-16.** What did Jesus mean when he said his followers must become as little children? What characteristics of children did Jesus want his disciples to imitate?

5. **Mark 10: 17-22, 28-31.** What was lacking in this rich young church member of fine moral character? What really kept him from listening to Jesus' call for enlistment? What did the disciples of Jesus say they had done? (Compare Luke 5: 1-11.) What does it mean "to leave all to follow Jesus"?

6. **Luke 14: 25-35.** What does Jesus mean by "hateth" when used as a condition of enlisting in his cause? In modern terms what does it mean to "renounce all"? What do we renounce, when we become followers of Jesus today?

7. Read rapidly the stories in **Luke 15: 11-32** and **Luke 19: 1-10** (see pages 82, 131). Just what conditions did the prodigal son meet before he was received back into his father's house? Compare with this Zacchæus's offer to make good his past dishonest dealings. How far must a man make past wrongs right before he can enlist in Jesus' cause?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What is your idea of what it means to become a follower of Jesus? What is the ordinary statement of what it means?

2. What are the requirements Jesus made of those who would be his followers?

a. **Mark 1: 16-20, Mark 3: 31-35** (Section 1). What did Jesus ask of his immediate followers?

b. **Mark 8: 34-38, Luke 14: 25-35** (Sections 2, 6). If a man asked you what he must renounce, or what kind of a cross he had to take up, to become a Christian, what would you tell him?

c. **Mark 10: 13-16, 17-22, 28-31** (Sections 4, 5). What characteristics of children did Jesus want his disciples to have? What was lacking in this rich young church member of fine moral character?

d. What light, if any, do the stories of the prodigal son and Zacchæus throw on whether a man must make past wrongs right before he can become a Christian? **Luke 15: 11-32, Luke 19: 1-10** (Section 7).

e. Try to forget for the moment, the idea you had of what it means to become a follower of Jesus and in the light of these incidents state just what Jesus put up to men in his day.

3. How does a man become a follower of Jesus? How does this differ from the way you join any other sacrificial cause under a great leader?

4. How much does the country ask of its soldiers? How much does Jesus ask when a man enlists in his cause?

5. Some say that our present economic and political order is unchristian, and that it is not possible to be a business man or in political life today without compromising on Jesus' requirements of his followers. What is your conviction on this? If you think it is not possible to be a real Christian in present business, industrial, and political life, what would you suggest to a man to do: refuse to take part in business or politics or do the best he can under the circumstances, even though it involves compromising? Why?

6. How are followers won to Jesus and his cause? What is the relative importance of seeking to win others to become followers of Jesus and of living so that one's spirit and acts recommend Jesus and his teachings?

7. What does loyalty to Jesus mean? How does it differ in its quality from loyalty to the President or loyalty to the commander of an army? What difference does it make in action?

CHAPTER XXIII

What Is the Christian Ideal of Chivalry?

Jesus Sets a High Standard for Men and Women

Students of history say that Christianity in every land where it has been introduced has resulted in a decided advance in the place of women and in the standards for men and women. How does it happen that Christianity brings this result? What sort of an ideal did Jesus give for men and women?

BIBLE REFERENCES

Matt. 5: 21-24, 27, 28.

- 21 "You have heard how the men of old were told, '*Murder not:*
whoever murders must come up for sentence,
22 whoever maligns his brother must come before the Sanhedrin,
whoever curses his brother must go to the fire of Gehenna.'
But I tell you, whoever is angry with his brother [without
23 causel will be sentenced by God. So if you remember, even
when offering your gift at the altar, that your brother has
24 any grievance against you, leave your gift at the very altar
and go away, first be reconciled to your brother, then come
back and offer your gift. . . .
27 You have heard how it used to be said, *Do not commit*
28 *adultery*. But I tell you, any one who even looks with lust
at a woman has committed adultery with her already in
his heart."

Mark 10: 2-12.

- 2 Now some Pharisees came up and asked him if a man was
3 allowed to divorce his wife. This was to tempt him. So he
4 replied, "What did Moses lay down for you?" They said,
"Moses permitted a man to *divorce her by writing out a sepa-*
5 *ration notice*." Jesus said to them, "He wrote you that com-
6 mand on account of the hardness of your hearts. But from
the beginning, when God created the world,
Male and female, He created them:

7 hence a man shall leave his father and mother,
 8 and the pair shall be one flesh.
 9 So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What God has
 10 joined, then, man must not separate." Indoors, the dis-
 11 ciples again asked him about this, and he said to them,
 "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman
 12 is an adulterer to the former, and she is an adulteress
 if she divorces her husband and marries another
 man."

Luke 7: 36-39, 48-50.

36 One of the Pharisees asked him to dinner, and entering
 37 the house of the Pharisee he reclined at table. Now there
 was a woman in the town who was a sinner, and when she
 found out that Jesus was at table in the house of the
 38 Pharisee she brought an alabaster flask of perfume and
 stood behind him at his feet in tears; her tears began to
 wet his feet, so she wiped them with the hair of her head,
 pressed kisses on them, and anointed them with the per-
 39 fume. When his host the Pharisee noticed this, he said to
 himself, "If he was a prophet he would know what sort of
 a woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." . . .
 48 And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." His fellow
 49 guests began to say to themselves, "Who is this, to forgive
 50 even sins?" But he said to the woman, "Your faith has
 saved you; go in peace."

Mark 7: 8-13.

8 "You drop what God commands and hold to human tradi-
 9 tion. Yes, forsooth," he added, "you set aside what God
 10 commands, so as to maintain your own tradition. Thus,
 Moses said, *Honour your father and mother, and, He who*
 11 *curses his father or mother is to suffer death.* But you
 say that if a man tells his father or mother, 'This money
 might have been at your service, but it is Korban' (that
 12 is, dedicated to God), he is exempt, so you hold, from
 13 doing anything for his father or mother. That is repeal-
 ing the word of God in the interests of the tradition which
 you keep up. And you do many things like that."

Luke 10: 38-41.

38 In the course of their journey he entered a certain village,
 and a woman called Martha welcomed him to her house.
 39 She had a sister called Mary, who seated herself at the feet
 40 of the Lord to listen to his talk. Now Martha was so busy
 attending to them that she grew worried; she came up and
 said, "Lord, is it all one to you that my sister has left me

to do all the work alone? Come, tell her to lend me a hand."
 41 The Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, Mary has chosen the best dish, and she is not to be dragged away from it."

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Matt. 5: 21-28.** Which reveals a man's real attitude toward women: what he does or what he thinks? How much does what he thinks influence his actions?

2. What in modern life tends to appeal to low thinking and questionable attitudes regarding the relations of men and women?

3. Under the customs and laws of Jesus' time, a woman might be divorced by her husband for the most trivial causes—for instance, for scorching the food prepared for a meal. She was subject to the whims of her husband. Read Jesus' sharp words about these easy divorce practices and his insistence on the sacredness of marriage. **Mark 10: 2-12.** Do you or do you not think Jesus would speak with equal severity concerning divorce laws and practices today? Why?

4. **Luke 7: 36-39, 48-50.** Why does society persist in a double standard? How can we help in establishing a single standard?

5. **Mark 7: 1-13.** How much of our courteous treatment of parents and of women by men and of men by women, is due to custom; how much of it grows out of the deep regard of a genuine chivalry? What causes the difference?

6. **Luke 10: 38-41.** Jesus was evidently a welcome guest in the home of Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus. What fine comradeships were those of Jesus! How do fine friendships of men and women help pure thinking and high living?

7. Glance again at Chapter XVII (page 82) and see the evidences of Jesus' high regard for people.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What current rules of courtesy have grown out of a high regard for women? What have arisen out of the regard of children for their parents?

2. What customs in modern life tend to cheapen or degrade the relationships of boys and girls and men and women? What effect are these having upon home and social life?

3. How do the possibilities of genuine chivalry compare today with Jesus' day? What effect has Christianity had upon the attitude toward women, and her place in the life of a nation?

4. What in the practices of Jesus' day regarding these matters

did Jesus condemn? Mark 10: 2-12; Luke 7: 36-39, 48-50 (Sections 3 and 4). Why? How did Jesus show his reverence for the personality of others? Why did he place so strong an emphasis upon high thinking? Matt. 5: 21-28 (Section 1). How important do you feel Jesus' emphasis is here? What attitude should society take toward a man of impure thought, with low regard for women?

5. What practices and customs today make it difficult to maintain a Christian standard of chivalry?

6. In what ways is a double standard contrary to Jesus' ideals? Why does it persist?

7. Do you or do you not believe it is possible to stamp out impurity? What incentives would lead men and women to living that is clean and true in thought and deed?

8. How can we ensure fine comradeship of men and women founded on equality and mutual respect?

CHAPTER XXIV

How Is One's Life Work Discovered?

Jesus Shows the Christian's Object in Life

A person spends a major share of time and energy in the life work followed. This is true both of the man at his business or profession and of the woman in the home or in any other vocation. Further, business and political life represent perhaps the most unchristian parts of the present world. If society is to be made Christian, in some way a person's daily task must be of greater help to that end than it is at present. How can a life work be discovered in and through which a person can best help in the Christianization of the world? Of what real importance is a person's daily task in and of itself, in the advancement of the Christian cause?

BIBLE REFERENCES

Mark 1: 14-20.

- 14 After John had been arrested Jesus went to Galilee
15 preaching the gospel of God; he said, "The time has now
come, God's reign is near: repent and believe in the gospel."
16 Now as he passed along the sea of Galilee he saw Simon
and Simon's brother Andrew netting fish in the sea—for
17 they were fishermen; so Jesus said to them, "Come, follow
18 me and I will make you fish for men." At once they
19 dropped their nets and went after him. Then going on a
little further he saw James the son of Zebedaeus and his
brother John; they too were in their boat, mending their
20 nets; he called them at once, and they left their father
Zebedaeus in the boat with the crew and went to follow
him.

Mark 8: 34-37.

- 34 Then he called the crowd to him with his disciples and
said to them, "If anyone wishes to follow me, let him deny
himself, take up his cross, and so follow me;
35 for whoever wants to save his life will lose it,
and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's
will save it.

36 What profit is it for a man to gain the whole world and
37 to forfeit his soul? What could a man offer as an equivalent for his soul?

Luke 9: 57-62.

57 And as they journeyed along the road a man said to him,
58 "I will follow you anywhere." Jesus said to him,

"The foxes have their holes,
the wild birds have their nests,
but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head"

59 He said to another man, "Follow me"; but he said, "Let me
60 go and bury my father first of all." Jesus said to him,
"Leave the dead to bury their own dead; you go and spread
61 the news of the Reign of God." Another man also said to
him, "I will follow you, Lord. But let me first say good-bye
62 to my people at home" Jesus said to him, "No one is any
use to the Reign of God who puts his hand to the plough
and then looks behind him."

Mark 10: 17-21.

17 As he went out on the road a man ran up and knelt
down before him, "Good teacher," he said, "what must
18 I do to inherit life eternal?" Jesus said to him, "Why call
19 me 'good'? No one is good, no one but God. You know
the commands: *do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not
steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, honour*
20 *your father and mother.*" "Teacher," he said, "I have ob-
21 served all these commands from my youth" Jesus looked
at him and loved him. "There is one thing you want,"
he said: "go and sell all you have; give the money to the
poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, take
up the cross, and follow me."

Matt. 20: 20-28.

20 Then the mother of the sons of Zebedaeus came up to
21 him with her sons, praying him for a favour. He said to
her, "What do you want?" She said, "Give orders that my
two sons are to sit at your right hand and at your left in
22 your Realm." Jesus replied, "You do not know what you
are asking. Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?"
23 They said to him, "We can." "You shall drink my cup,"
said Jesus, "but it is not for me to grant seats at my right
hand and at my left; these belong to the men for whom
24 they have been destined by my Father." When the ten
25 heard of this, they were angry at the two brothers, but
Jesus called them and said,
"You know the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them,
and their great men overbear them:

- 26 not so with you.
Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant,
27 and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave;
28 just as the Son of man has not come to be served but to serve,
and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Matt. 6: 31-33.

- 31 "Do not be troubled, then, and cry, 'What are we to eat?' or
'what are we to drink?' or 'how are we to be clothed?'"
32 (pagans make all that their aim in life) for your heavenly
33 Father knows quite well you need all that. Seek God's
Realm and his goodness, and all that will be yours over and
above"

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Mark 1: 14-20.** Why does Jesus need some men who will make Christian work their life profession?
2. **Mark 8: 34-37.** What is wrong in choosing as a life work that which will (1) require the least effort—a "snap"—or (2) yield the most money?
3. **Luke 9: 57-62.** Did these men really want a place in the task which Jesus was proposing?
4. **Mark 10: 17-21.** Why did this young business man not line up all the resources of his life to aid the cause of Jesus in the world?
5. **Matt. 20: 20-28.** What is the true ambition which should guide a man in choosing his life work?
6. **Matt. 6: 31-33.** How can a business man obey the injunction to "Seek first the Kingdom of God"?
7. Glance over the week's readings. What are some of the Christian principles to follow as the basis for choosing a life work?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION¹

1. What would you call the most important life callings represented in your town?
2. How far can life occupations be ranked in the order of their importance in the present world task?
3. Just what relation have the various life callings to the present world need? For instance, specifically, what can a lawyer, a physician, a person in business, a farmer, or a worker in indus-

¹ Questions for Group Discussion adapted from Harris-Robbins, "A Challenge to Life Service."

try do in and through the vocation followed, to help? How important are a person's working hours in the present world task?

4. How far can a person atone for hindering the Kingdom in his business or profession if he works for it in his spare hours?

5. To what extent is the distinction between "sacred" and "secular" in life callings justified?

6. What is a "call"? Which branches of life work may one choose without a "call"?

7. What data is necessary for an intelligent decision as to one's place in the present world task?

8. Can a person expect God's direction in the decision of his life calling? What sort of guidance should he expect? How can he secure the guidance?

CHAPTER XXV

What Is a Fair Chance for All?

Jesus Shows His Concern for the Weak and Oppressed

Immigrants have been drawn to America as a land of opportunity, where every person has a fair chance. Much of the present unrest comes because social groupings feel they are not having a fair chance. A primary concern of the Christian movement has been the relief of oppression. In building a new world, a fundamental necessity is a fair chance for all. From the Christian point of view, what constitutes a fair chance? How can we ensure it to all?

BIBLE REFERENCES

Luke 1: 46-55.

46 Then Mary said

"My soul magnifies the Lord,

47 *My spirit has joy in God my Saviour:*

48 *for he has considered the humiliation of his servant.*

From this time forth all generations will call me blessed,

49 *for He who is Mighty has done great things for me.*

His name is holy,

50 *his mercy is on generation after generation,*

for those who reverence him.

51 *He has done a deed of might with his arm,*

he has scattered the proud with their purposes,

52 *princes he has dethroned and the poor he has uplifted,*

53 *he has satisfied the hungry with good things and sent
the rich away empty.*

54 *He has succoured his servant Israel,*

mindful of his mercy—

55 *as he promised our fathers;*

to have mercy on Abraham and his offspring for ever."

Luke 6: 20-26.

20 Then, raising his eyes he looked at his disciples and said:

"Blessed are you poor!

the Realm of God is yours.

- 21 Blessed are you who hunger to-day!
 you shall be satisfied.
 Blessed are you who weep to-day!
 you shall laugh.
- 22 Blessed are you when men will hate you,
 when they will excommunicate you and denounce you
 and defame you as wicked on account of the Son
 of man;
 23 rejoice on that day and leap for joy!
 rich is your reward in heaven—
 for their fathers did the very same to the prophets.
- 24 But woe to you rich folk!
 you get all the comforts you will ever get.
- 25 Woe to you who have your fill to-day!
 you will be hungry.
 Woe to you who laugh to-day!
 you will wail and weep.
- 26 Woe to you when all men speak well of you!
 that is just what their fathers did to the false prophets."

Mark 10: 13-16.

- 13 Now people brought children for him to touch them,
 14 and the disciples checked them; but Jesus was angry when
 he saw this, and he said to them, "Let the children come
 to me, do not stop them: the Realm of God belongs to such
 15 as these. I tell you truly, whoever will not submit to the
 Reign of God like a child will never get into it at all."
 16 Then he put his arms round them, laid his hands on them
 and blessed them.

Luke 15: 1-8.

- 1 Now the taxgatherers and sinners were all approach-
 2 ing him to listen to him, but the Pharisees and the
 scribes complained, "He welcomes sinners and eats along
 3 with them!" So he told them this parable, "Which of
 4 you with a hundred sheep, if he loses one, does not leave
 the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the lost one till
 5 he finds it? When he finds it he puts it on his shoulders
 6 with joy, and when he gets home he gathers his friends and
 neighbours. 'Rejoice with me,' he says to them, 'for I have
 7 found the sheep I lost.' So, I tell you, there will be joy
 in heaven over a single sinner who repents, more than
 8 over ninety-nine good people who do not need to repent."

Luke 16: 19-21.

- 19 There was a rich man, clad in purple and fine linen, who
 20 lived sumptuously every day. Outside his door lay a poor

21 man called Lazarus; he was a mass of ulcers, and fain to eat up the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Luke 1: 46-55.** How would cradle songs of this sort influence the interests of Jesus in the poor and oppressed?

2. **Luke 6: 20-26.** How much do you feel the hope of a better chance in the ordinary things of life influenced the common people to follow Jesus? When is this better chance for the poor, the hungry, and the persecuted coming? How?

3. **Mark 10: 13-16.** How far does a man reveal his real attitude toward people by the way he treats children? What groups of children are not having a fair chance in modern life? In what regards? Why is it so difficult to prevent child labor? What is a fair chance for a child?

4. **Luke 15: 1-8.** Does society today really give a person who is down and out a fair chance to get back on his feet?

5. What groups of people have little chance to be decent, because of their surroundings? What attention did Jesus give to removing people's handicaps? What is modern society doing to remove and prevent the handicaps which disease and deformity bring into the world? In how far is the degree of society's interest in its helpless and weaker members a fair test of its Christ-likeness?

6. **Luke 16: 19-21.** What was it in the rich man's attitude toward the beggar which Jesus seems to condemn? Read the entire story (see page 83).

7. Think over this week's readings and state your general impression of Jesus' viewpoint.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Think of your own town or state or nation: What persons or groups do you know who have less than a fair chance? In what respects? What persons or groups have more than a fair chance? In what respects?

2. How would you say Jesus' idea of a fair chance differs from the ordinary standard?

a. What was Jesus' attitude toward children? Toward the down and out? **Mark 10: 13-16** (Section 3). **Luke 15: 1-8** (Section 4).

b. Just how much attention did Jesus give to removing the handicaps of people? What does this show as to his idea of a fair chance?

c. Read **Luke 6: 20-26** (Section 2). Would you or would you

not say the crowds followed him because of a hope for a better chance in the ordinary things of life? Why?

d. Why did the common people hear him gladly and those in places of authority oppose him?

e. What evidence do you find of Jesus' attitude toward those who were unsympathetic with human need?

3. Jesus nowhere states what he means by a fair chance. Judging by the incidents of this week and your study of his life, what would you think Jesus' ideal of a fair chance might be?

4. If a member of the labor group asked you what was Jesus' ideal of a fair chance, what would you tell him? What would you tell a Negro or a foreigner? If either replied that there was no such chance in America, what would you say?

5. How far is there a fair chance for all in industry? How far would you say that the goal of the labor group is a fair chance for all or special advantage for certain groups? Why?

6. Why do many employers fight labor's having a share in the profits of the industry? In the light of Jesus' ideal what do you think of industrial democracy? Suppose industrial democracy lessens the efficiency of industry, would or would it not still be justified?

7. Which will bring fairness in the present situation: the raising of the income and standards of living or the equalizing of income and living standards?

8. How far have the less favored races in America, such as the Negro and immigrant, an equal opportunity with others? What makes the difference?

9. How does a fair chance for everybody compare in an autocracy with a democracy? In a non-Christian with a Christian country?

10. Just how much equality of opportunity is there in America? To what extent is our country a democracy? What are the most outstanding changes necessary in American life if a fair chance for all is to be secured?

11. How much of missionary work is based on saving the souls of weaker peoples, and how much is based on Jesus' confidence in the real possibilities of people?

12. Why should weaker nations have an equal opportunity with stronger nations? To what extent should President Wilson's proposal of an equal chance for weaker nations be extended to those in the Far East, the Near East, South America, and Africa?

CHAPTER XXVI

What Is a Fair Income?

Jesus' Attitude on Money Perplexes the Privileged

How much money has a Christian a right to? This is a real question today. Some say: If he makes his money in accordance with present standards of honesty, and gives generously to good causes, then his growing prosperity is an evidence of the blessing of the Lord; and he should be allowed to make as much as he can. Others reply: The present situation gives some men an unfair advantage and furnishes them the privileges of wealth and the joy of giving far beyond that which is justified by their contribution to society, and to the great disadvantage of thousands of others.

Jesus had some things to say in regard to money which did not please the privileged in his day. From the viewpoint of Jesus when is an earning legitimate?

BIBLE REFERENCES

Luke 19: 1-10.

1 Then he entered Jericho. And as he passed through
2 it, there was a man called Zacchaeus, the head of the
3 taxgatherers, a wealthy man, who tried to see what Jesus
was like; but he could not, on account of the crowd—
4 for he was small of stature. So he ran forward and
climbed into a sycamore tree to get a sight of him, as he
5 was to pass that road. But when Jesus reached the spot
he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down at
6 once, for I must stay at your house to-day." He came down
7 at once and welcomed him gladly. But when they saw
this, everyone began to mutter that he had gone to be
8 the guest of a sinner. So Zacchaeus stopped and said to
the Lord, "I will give the half of all I have, Lord, to the
poor, and if I have cheated anybody I will give him back
9 four times as much." And Jesus said of him, "To-day sal-
vation has come to this house, since Zacchaeus here is a
10 son of Abraham."

Luke 18: 18-30.

18 Then a ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what am I to do
19 to inherit life eternal?" Jesus said to him, "Why call me

Notice Jesus' statement: "See and keep clear of covetousness in every shape and form, for a man's life is not part of his possessions because he has ample wealth."

5. Luke 12: 22, 29-32. What do you think Jesus means when he says "Do not make food and clothing your object in life"?

6. Matt. 6: 19-24. When are God and money in competition?

7. What was Jesus' attitude toward money? What were his principles regarding money?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Why do men set out to make money?

2. What examples of profiteering have you known? What is profiteering?

3. How much money has an individual a right to make? On what principle would you determine when earnings are legitimate?

4. Let us see how Jesus helped rich men in his day to decide the problem of accumulating wealth:

a. Luke 19: 1-10 (Section 1). Zacchaeus had evidently made some of his money illegitimately. What did he do with this money when he came in contact with Jesus? Why?

b. Luke 12: 13-21 (Section 4). The man out of the crowd wanted Jesus to help him get his part of the inheritance. What did Jesus reply? What point did he make about the farmer who hoarded his grain? When has a man a right to become a non-producer?

c. Luke 18: 18-30 (Sections 2, 3). The rich young man had lived a clean, moral life. Why did Jesus ask him to give away his money?

d. Matt. 6: 19-24 (Section 6). What does Jesus mean by "store up treasures in heaven," "ye cannot serve God and mammon"?

5. From these stories when would you say Jesus objected to men's possessing wealth? Where do you think Jesus would draw the line between legitimate earnings and profiteering? When does the accumulation of wealth by an individual become contrary to the ideal of Jesus?

6. If a person is willing to make his money within the limits of the present standards of honesty and to give of it generously to good causes, is he then justified, from the Christian viewpoint, in accumulating large wealth? Why or why not? How far is his prosperity an evidence of his ability, how far has he gotten

it because the present organization of business gives him an unfair advantage?

7. Some say good causes could not be financed without wealthy men's money; others reply that the millionaire is really robbing many men of smaller income of their rightful share of wealth and of the joy of giving to these enterprises themselves. What do you think about it?

8. On Jesus' principle what limit, if any, would you place on the minimum and maximum income that a person had a right to receive? How far should this minimum and maximum be left to the individual conscience; how far should it be regulated by society?

9. Should or should not a man be required to give to society service equivalent to money received? Would this apply to money inherited as well as money earned? When has a man of independent income a right to live a life of leisure?

10. When has a nation a right, according to Jesus' standard, to control its natural resources or its financial credit to the disadvantage of other nations?

11. Just how would you state the Christian ideal in the making and use of money?

CHAPTER XXVII

Is Democracy Possible?

Jesus Shows His Confidence in the Common People

Democracy is difficult to define; but the term represents in the world today a greater or less belief that the people can be trusted with their affairs and that the "common man" should "come into his full rights as a member of society." How far can the people be trusted? What restrictions should be placed upon democracy? How far can we go with Jesus in his confidence in people?

BIBLE REFERENCES

Mark 1: 16-20.

16 Now as he passed along the sea of Galilee he saw Simon and Simon's brother Andrew netting fish in the sea—for
17 they were fishermen; so Jesus said to them, "Come, follow
18 me and I will make you fish for men." At once they
19 dropped their nets and went after him. Then going on a little further he saw James the son of Zebedaeus and his brother John; they too were in their boat, mending their
20 nets; he called them at once, and they left their father Zebedaeus in the boat with the crew and went to follow him.

Mark 2: 13-17.

13 Then he went out again by the seaside, and all the crowd
14 came to him and he taught them. As he passed along he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax-office; he said to him, "Follow me," and he rose and followed him.
15 Now Levi was at table in his own house, and he had many taxgatherers and sinners as guests along with Jesus and his disciples—for there were many of them among his
16 followers. So when some scribes of the Pharisees saw he was eating with sinners and taxgatherers they said to his disciples, "Why does he eat and drink with taxgatherers
17 and sinners?" On hearing this, Jesus said to them,

"Those who are strong have no need of a doctor, but those who are ill:

I have not come to call just men but sinners"

Mark 6: 1-6.

1 Leaving there he went to his native place, followed by
2 his disciples. When the sabbath came, he began to teach
in the synagogue, and the large audience was astounded.
"Where did he get all this?" they said. "What is the
meaning of this wisdom he is endowed with? And these
3 miracles, too, that his hand perform! Is this not the
joiner, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joses
and Judas and Simon? Are not his sisters settled here
4 among us?" So they were repelled by him. Then Jesus
said to them, "A prophet never goes without honour except
in his native place and among his kinsfolk and in his
5 home." There he could not do any miracle, beyond laying
6 his hands on a few sick people and curing them. He was
astonished at their lack of faith.

Luke 10: 1, 17, 18.

1 After that the Lord commissioned other seventy dis-
ciples, sending them in front of him two by two to
every town and place that he intended to visit himself. . . .
17 The seventy came back with joy "Lord," they said, "the
18 very daemons obey us in your name." He said to them,
"Yes, I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of
lightning.

Matt. 28: 16-20.

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the hill where
17 Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him
18 they worshipped him, though some were in doubt. Then
Jesus came forward to them and said, "Full authority has
19 been given to me in heaven and on earth; go and make
disciples of all nations, baptize them in the name of the
20 Father and the Son and the holy Spirit, and teach them to
obey all the commands I have laid on you. And I will be
with you all the time, to the very end of the world."

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Mark 1: 16-20.** If you had been living in Palestine what hope would you have had for a world enterprise started with ignorant fishermen as the leaders?

2. **Mark 2: 13-17.** Why did Jesus have confidence that publicans and sinners would "make good" in his cause?

3. **Mark 6: 1-6.** Why did the people of his home town doubt Jesus' ability to be a great leader? Where do you find similar attitudes today?

4. **Luke 10: 1, 17, 18.** What responsibility did Jesus place upon his disciples for the extension of his cause? Would you have been willing to trust them this far?

5. John's gospel comments: "Upon this many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (John 6: 66). In your experience, how much can be depended on the rank and file of the people holding steady, when the odds commence to go against an enterprise?

6. Review the account of Jesus' trial and crucifixion (see Chapter XX). How much dependence was Jesus able to place upon his followers in the days when severe issues faced him?

7. **Matt. 28: 16-20.** What evidence have you today that Jesus' confidence in his little band of followers was justifiable?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. When the forefathers founded a republic in the United States what restrictions did they place upon the power of the people? Why? Are those restrictions still necessary and wise? Are you in favor of placing upon the people greater or less responsibility for deciding the nation's welfare? Why?

2. When Jesus started his cause, what sort of people did he choose as his followers? Why did he put his dependence upon folks of this sort? What do you think of his method? Was his confidence justified?

3. Some say there is no hope of progress except as leaders are found who can do the planning and thinking for the people and show them the way; others feel the difficulty at present is that by the use of propaganda a few leaders are seeking "to make up the people's mind for them" and what is needed is a greater chance for the people to think and act for themselves.

a. What is your opinion?

b. Would a larger opportunity for free discussion and a great amount of responsibility placed on the people help or hinder the progress of the nation and the world?

4. Why is it so difficult to get the people to take responsibility in the Church, in movements for the betterment of politics, and in other public enterprises? If the people really had more part in deciding what should be done, do you or do you not think they would be more ready to take their share in community and national life?

5. With which of the following do you find yourself most

nearly in agreement and why? Which of these proposals do you feel is the more practicable?

a. There will be greater happiness if the more capable are allowed to accumulate wealth without restriction and then bestow blessings upon the people through libraries, parks, endowed institutions, and the like.

b. The greater happiness will come if society restricts the accumulations of the few and concerns itself with giving a larger opportunity for everyone to attain and contribute to the welfare and happiness of the common good.

6. In the education of children in home, school, and church, adults for the most part decide what is good for children and see that they learn or do as the adults think best.

a. Would you agree with those who advocate that children shall have a larger share in the management and working out of their education? Why or why not?

b. In what regards would greater democracy in the management of home, church, and school be possible?

c. If children were given more chance to decide and act for themselves, would it be dangerous to their welfare or would it make them better citizens? Why do you think so?

7. What restrictions, if any, should be placed upon the public proclamation and discussion of "dangerous" ideas or policies? Can we trust the people to decide the truth or falsity of radical proposals, or must restrictions be placed upon their dissemination? How far do you believe in the right of free speech and assembly?

8. In the light of Jesus' ideals what do you think of industrial democracy? What share, if any, should the workmen be given in the control of industry? Why?

9. What opportunity has an individual citizen to make his convictions felt in the political action of the state or the nation? To what extent does the citizen give away to political leaders the right to decide what is good for him? Does this represent democracy? Why, or why not?

10. What is democracy? In how far is it something that can be guaranteed once for all as in our constitution; in how far does it depend upon the continued conscientious efforts of the people? When is democracy achieved?

CHAPTER XXVIII

What Hope Is There that the World Can Be Made Christian?

Jesus' Emphasis on Changing Wrong Conditions

There are two viewpoints regarding the Christianization of the world. One group says: "Save the individual and then social and business relations will be Christian." The other group replies: "An individual Christianity does not guarantee Christianized economic and political conditions. Further, it would be easier to reach individuals if social relations were not so unchristian."

One group claims: "The world is growing worse. There is no hope of Christianizing the world. All that can be done is to rescue individuals. Indeed, Jesus did not intend his Gospel to apply to social relations." The other group replies: "We have made remarkable progress, considering the little attention that has been given to social Christianity. Christianity has proved it can save individuals. It will prove equally powerful in society, once Christians dare really to try to make business, political, and international relations Christian."

With which group do you find yourself most in agreement? What changes must be made, if the world is to be Christian? What hope is there that the world can really be made Christian?

BIBLE REFERENCES

Luke 3: 10-14.

10 The crowds asked him, "Then what are we to do?"
11 He replied, "Let everyone who possesses two shirts share with him who has none, and let him who has food do likewise." Taxgatherers also came to get baptized, and they
12 said to him, "Teacher, what are we to do?" He said to
13 them, "Never exact more than your fixed rate." Soldiers
14 also asked him, "And what are we to do?" He said to them, "Never extort money, never lay a false charge, but be content with your pay."

Matt. 11: 20-24.

20 Then he proceeded to upbraid the towns where his many
 miracles had been performed, because they would not re-
 21 pent. "Woe to you, Khorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!
 Had the miracles performed in you been performed in Tyre
 and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth
 22 and ashes. I tell you this, it will be more bearable for Tyre
 23 and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you. And you,
 O Capharnahum! *Exalted to heaven? No, you will sink to*
Hades!—for if the miracles performed in you had been per-
 formed in Sodom, Sodom would have lasted to this day.
 24 I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day
 of judgment than for you."

Matt. 20: 20-28.

20 Then the mother of the sons of Zebedaeus came up to
 21 him with her sons, praying him for a favour. He said to
 her, "What do you want?" She said, "Give orders that my
 two sons are to sit at your right hand and at your left in
 22 your Realm." Jesus replied, "You do not know what you
 are asking. Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?"
 23 They said to him, "We can." "You shall drink my cup,"
 said Jesus, "but it is not for me to grant seats at my right
 hand and at my left; these belong to the men for whom
 24 they have been destined by my Father." When the ten
 25 heard of this, they were angry at the two brothers, but
 Jesus called them and said,
 "You know the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them,
 and their great men overbear them:
 26 not so with you.
 Whoever wants to be great among you must be your
 servant,
 27 and whoever wants to be first among you must be your
 slave;
 28 just as the Son of man has not come to be served but to
 serve,
 and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Matt. 23: 1-33. See page 96.

Luke 11: 29-32.

29 As the crowds were thronging to him, he proceeded to
 say,
 "This is an evil generation: it demands a Sign,
 but no Sign will be given to it except the Sign of
 Jonah;
 30 for as Jonah was a Sign to the Ninivites,
 so shall the Son of man be to this generation.

- 31 The queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them;
for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon,
and here is One greater than Solomon.
- 32 The men of Ninive will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it;
for when Jonah preached they did repent,
and here is One greater than Jonah."

Luke 4: 16-21. See page 7.

Matt. 23: 37-39.

- 37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! slaying the prophets and stoning those who have been sent to you! How often I would fain have gathered your children as a fowl gathers her brood under her wings! But you would not have it! See,
38 brood under her wings! But you would not have it! See,
39 *your House is left to you, desolate.* For I tell you, you will never see me again till you say, *Blessed be he who comes in the Lord's name.*"

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. **Luke 3: 10-14.** What did John find wrong with the policemen and the business men? What might he notice today that should be changed? What unjust financial practices will be impossible when the world is Christian?

2. **Matt. 11: 20-24.** Jesus here condemns entire towns for their attitudes and actions. What difference have you noticed in the character and spirit of different towns and cities? What makes this difference? Notice also Jesus' yearning over a city (Matt. 23: 37-39) and his condemnation of this generation (Luke 11: 29-32).

3. What were the chief points in Jesus' indictment against the religious leaders of his day? (See page 94ff.) On what ground did he assume that these men had a common responsibility as a group? What groups or classes of society should be thus condemned today?

4. **Matt. 20: 20-28.** How do political rulers today compare in their practices with the "rulers of the Gentiles" in Jesus' day? How is it possible to put political leadership on the basis Jesus indicates?

5. See Chapter I, which gives the record of Jesus' committing himself to the Kingdom of God. To the cause of the Kingdom of God he gave himself. We have found that for the Jews this was a social cause which meant an ideal state of society where there would be peace, prosperity, and happiness under the rule

of God. Did Jesus share the Jewish idea that the Kingdom of God would represent ideal conditions?

6. Luke 4: 16-21. See page 7 for the historical setting. Did Jesus in his life follow out this program? Was Jesus interested in righting the wrong of the world? What is the basis for your answer?

7. Review Chapter VIII to see what confidence Jesus had that the Kingdom of God would triumph. Do you share his confidence? Why, or why not?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What are the most Christlike parts of your town? (Of the nation or the world?) What are the most unchristlike parts? Why do you call each Christlike or unchristlike?

2. What do you mean by a part of your town being Christian? If a representative from a non-Christian country asked you to show him a Christlike home, a Christlike public school, a Christlike church, a Christlike store, and a Christlike industrial plant, which of these could you show him? If all the people of your town had decided to become Christian, would it be Christlike? What is the difference between evangelizing and Christianizing a town?

3. How do schools, manufacturing concerns, political organizations, towns, and nations, of which you know, differ in reputation? What determines the reputation of a social grouping? Notice that Jesus dealt with social groupings as if they were individuals and accountable for their actions. To what extent should social groups be held accountable for their acts the same as individuals?

4. What are some of the outstanding wrongs in the life of your town which must be righted? What were some of the wrongs in his day which Jesus felt must be made right? Matt. 11: 20-24 (Section 2), Matt. 20: 1-28 (Section 4), Luke 3: 10-14 (Section 1).

5. At the beginning of his life work to what task did Jesus commit himself? (See Section 5.) What did he say he had come to do? Luke 4: 16-22 (Section 6). Did Jesus share the Jewish idea that the Kingdom of God would represent ideal conditions?

6. What are some of the most necessary changes in the life of today if it is to be Christian? If you could purchase one advance by your life this year, what would you choose as the most important? Why?

7. Do you or do you not believe that the Christian religion

would be as effective in transforming business, politics, international relations, and other aspects of life as it has proved in changing the life and character of individuals? What basis have you for your conclusion? How would you go at it to "convert" an industrial plant or a political party?

8 In making the world Christian, what relative emphasis would you place on winning individuals and on changing conditions which are wrong? In what ways is the value of the one dependent upon the other?

9. At the present rate of progress, how long will it take to Christianize the homes, schools, politics, business, and other parts of your town and the world? Is the task hopeless or is there some chance of making faster progress? Why do you hold your opinion?

CHAPTER XXIX

How Jesus Met Life Questions

A Review of How Jesus Faced the Issues of Life

In this chapter Bible references and questions for group discussion are omitted. It is hoped that each individual and group will frankly review how Jesus met life questions.

1. What was Jesus' attitude toward conditions as he found them in his day?

a. What wrongs did Jesus attack and seek to make right?

b. What conditions which reformers today are seeking to eradicate did he ignore?

c. Cite incidents in which Jesus forced the issue and set out aggressively to attain certain results. Why? Do you feel that at any time he was unduly drastic or radical?

d. Why was Jesus considered a dangerous reformer by the religious leaders and the best people of his day? Was he a dangerous reformer? Why do you think so?

e. Some people say an idealist must be practical and keep his feet on the ground, living his life as near his ideal as conditions will permit. Others say that he must be true to his ultimate ideal at any cost, and attempt to adjust himself to conditions as they are means to compromise. Which do you think Jesus did? What evidence have you?

2. What method did Jesus use in helping folks who brought him questions and problems?

a. Did Jesus seemingly have a stock of prepared answers, or did he meet each situation as it arose?

b. How many direct answers to questions do you find? Did he give those who brought questions to him a direct answer which showed them exactly what to do, or did he give them principles and throw back upon them the working out of these ideals in their lives?

c. Which helps a person the more, to tell him what to do or to help him see the issues and the ideals on which action might be based and allow him to solve the problem for himself?

3. What was the occasion of Jesus' teachings?

a. What evidence is there that Jesus staged events in order to teach truth; what evidence that his teachings grew out of occasions as they arose?

b. How does teaching which grows out of the meeting of actual life situations compare in effectiveness with formal teaching given apart from the actual problems on which it bears?

4. What was the comparative interest of Jesus in the individual and in social conditions?

a. How many times do you find in the gospels a record of Jesus dealing with matters which are purely personal; how many times do you find a record of his facing questions which involve social or group problems?

b. Some people say that Jesus' chief interest was with the individual and that he did not intend his teachings to apply to social conditions. What does the evidence show?

c. How far do you feel personal and social problems are inseparable?

5. How did Jesus meet the major issues of his life?

a. What were the major issues and crises of Jesus' life?

b. How did Jesus meet these issues?

c. What would you say were the great ideals or principles according to which Jesus lived his life and according to which he made his decisions?

d. To what extent do you find Christians today coming to the life of Jesus to get backing for what they have already decided to do; to what extent do you find them looking for help in Jesus' life on their problems and seeking to make their decisions according to Jesus' ideals? What should Christians do? Why?

6. Of what practical help on present-day problems are Jesus' life and teachings?

a. On what present-day questions have you found from these studies that Jesus' life and teachings give help? How? On what problems do you feel there is little, if any, help? Why?

b. Which of Jesus' ideals would require the most radical changes in present social, business, and political life if they were really carried out?

7. How would you summarize the big impressions you have gained from your study of Jesus' life?

a. If some person were to ask just for what did Jesus really stand; what were the outstanding events of his life; what

were the points of emphasis in his teachings—what would you reply?

b. What made people so attractive to Jesus? How did his attitude toward the lowly, the afflicted, and the outcaste differ from that of the people of his day? What was the effect of Jesus upon those with whom he came in contact? Why?

c. What were the sources of Jesus' power? What evidences are there of his dependence on his Father? How did he draw upon his Father for help and strength? How has Jesus helped to make God real for men and women today?

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